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THE DRAPER
IN
AUSTRALIA:

BEING A NARRATIVE OF
THREE YEARS' ADVENTURES AND EXPERIENCE
AT THE GOLD-FIELDS,
IN THE BUSH, AND IN THE CHIEF CITIES
OF
VICTORIA AND NEW SOUTH WALES;

WITH INFORMATION AND
ADVICE ADAPTED FOR THE INTENDING EMIGRANT AND OTHERS.

Wm. Freeman, fec.

DEDICATED TO THE DRAPERS OF ENGLAND.

LONDON:
WILLIAM FREEMAN, 69, FLEET STREET.

MDCCCLVI.

THE DRAK

A T R A L I A

W E L L E R

THE DRAK

W E L L E R

IPSWICH :

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P R E F A C E.

THE Author of the following pages is fully aware that numerous works on our Australian Colonies, from far abler pens than his, have appeared within the last few years. Some of them have been of an elaborate and expensive character; while others have been put forth by individuals who, without having left their native isle, yet undertook to counsel and direct the steps of multitudes of their fellow countrymen going forth in search of more remunerative employment. Such guides, as I can testify from my own experience, often proved fallacious and dangerous to the newly-arrived immigrant. I have endeavoured to avoid the errors into which many of my literary predecessors have fallen, and to correct many of the mistakes from which numerous emigrants have seriously suffered. My simple ambition has been to present to the reader, in a plain and homely style, a faithful record of my own life, adventures, experiences, and observations, during

a period of about three years, which were spent under circumstances the most favourable to the acquisition of a general knowledge of the condition, nature, and requirements of the country. My time having been about equally divided between the rising towns and cities, the gold-fields, and the bush lands of Victoria and New South Wales, I feel myself competent, in some measure, to express a well-considered and impartial opinion upon the occupations which it would be most advantageous for intending emigrants, possessed of the requisite qualifications, to turn their attention to. The narrative of my own adventures and labours will, accordingly, be interspersed with hints, warnings, and suggestions, which may be found instructive and useful.

Besides that portion of the work which relates more especially to myself and my movements, I have appended a concise description of all the principal features, phenomena, and productions of the two chief colonies; together with the prices of provisions, etc., and the rate of wages, according to the most recent intelligence from Melbourne and Sydney.

As my simple and unpretending aim has been to relate my own experience, such as it was, for the benefit of others, I trust due indulgence will be shown to the numerous defects which the critic will not fail to detect in the composition of the volume.

GEO. WILLMER.

22, *Cadogan Terrace,*
Sloane Street, Chelsea.

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THREE YEARS IN AUSTRALIA.

CHAPTER I.

PREPARATIONS FOR DEPARTURE.

It will not speedily be forgotten how strong and how general was the sensation produced in this country, some four years ago, by the golden tidings which reached our shores by every fresh vessel arriving from Australia. The excitement spread from class to class—from University men, the younger and portionless scions of our nobility, briefless barristers, and practiceless surgeons, down to the hardy and generally unambitious sons of the soil. Every department of trade and commerce was affected by the prevalent mania for emigration, which, like an ebb tide, drained off the population to the new El Dorado. Young men went off in shoals, lured by the golden attraction, and spread a perfect panic among employers. Even staid men, with large families, prosperous businesses, and settled habits, found themselves unable to resist the universal contagion, and fled from their fatherland; some taking with them their wives and children, and others leaving them behind with their friends, until they should find themselves in a

position to invite them across the ocean to share their new homes in the wilderness.

Among the latter class was the author of the present work. Having a distaste for the occupation in which I had been placed by older and wiser heads at a time when I was too young to exercise a choice, and stimulated by the hope of sudden affluence which was then inspiring so many bosoms, I resolved to relinquish the business in which I was engaged, and follow the stream. I was still further prompted to this step by considerations of health. I fondly hoped that the ocean voyage, and the free out-door life of a new country, would tend to restore my bodily vigour and mental elasticity, which had been seriously impaired by the close confinement of my former occupation as a draper.

In order to carry out my design, I endeavoured to select a vessel that should please my fancy, which proved rather more difficult than I at first imagined. However, after a lengthened search in the various docks of London, I decided on one which I thought I might trust myself in, as there were other persons quite willing to incur the same risk.

It being now a settled thing for me to take a voyage to Sydney, New South Wales, I began seriously to reflect on the best way in which I could invest the little capital which I possessed, as with rising markets in the Australian colonies there would be a chance for me to make some considerable profits on my outlay. I accordingly made the most of my time, working early and late in making my purchases and getting them on board the ship. Having done so, I found out, to my great annoyance, that the ship was likely to be detained a fortnight longer than was originally intended—an inconvenience which I believe very often happens, proving at the same time very detrimental to persons of limited means, and oftentimes leading to litigation. However, I felt inclined to wait patiently until such time as I expected to receive notice of the intended departure of the vessel; but as the circular did not come to hand as anticipated, I began to grow a little irritable at this unexpected

delay, though I had no thought of suing the agents for my loss of time. But I had entered into an engagement with four young men who were desirous of crossing the ocean in my company, and as I had taken an active part in engaging their passages, I felt somewhat responsible for the loss of time they, in common with myself, had incurred, and more especially as I was aware of their having parted very freely with their cash at a time when it ought to have been carefully husbanded.

Being desirous, then, that these gentlemen should economise their resources, which were rapidly melting away in the great expense incurred by living in London during this unpleasant detention, I at once consulted the agents on the propriety of their going on board the ship, and at once making that their home. To this proposition they at once consented, rather than subject themselves to litigation—a course which we should have been justified in pursuing. I contented myself with my family until such time as I was sure that the vessel would leave the dock.

In the meantime, I and my companions caught the “gold fever,” then so prevalent not only in Australia, but also in our native land. Thousands in London were afflicted with this disease, and few could obtain a certain cure without going to the gold fields in search of it. Such was our determination, and we accordingly expended about £100 jointly in the purchase of some of that host of implements, conveniences, and comforts, which were puffed so unscrupulously on the walls and in the public journals.

As the time of our departure drew near, I hastened on board the ship, in order to meet my companions, with their friends, so that we might come to a distinct understanding in their presence. I was anxious that they should be witnesses to a written agreement, which I thought myself justified in suggesting and drawing up for their approval, and which might become a sort of guide to our future proceedings on reaching the gold regions. I should not have rendered myself so conspicuous in this little affair, but

for the backwardness of all the rest, and therefore felt myself bound to do my utmost to promote the comfort and satisfaction of all the party. The covenant into which we mutually entered provided for our comfort in case of sickness, the disposal of our property in case of death, the prohibition of all Sunday labour, the distribution of work, the settlement of disputes, and other similar points affecting our individual and collective welfare. I had the honour to be unanimously elected treasurer and leader of this little band.

All being now arranged to the entire satisfaction of the parties concerned, I took my leave, with the idea of meeting my comrades at Gravesend on the morrow, as it was understood that the ship would leave the docks early in the morning, and be towed down the river as far as the above-named place, where it was to cast anchor for that night. Under this impression, therefore, I returned once more to my home, believing that it would be the last night for a long period that I should spend with those who were dearest to me on earth.

CHAPTER II.

THE PARTING DAY—COMMENCEMENT OF VOYAGE— CROSSING THE LINE.

It was on the morning of the 10th day of November, 1852, that I rose from my bed with a heart full and overflowing with grief. The moment had at length arrived when I must part, for a long season—perhaps for ever—from my beloved partner and my merry-hearted children, most of whom were too young to appreciate the gravity of the occasion. I must draw a veil over that parting scene, with its deep emotions, its bitter tears, its heart-breathed blessings, all relieved and brightened by the flatterer—Hope. For a season, I must confess, I was almost unmanned by the circumstances, and began to doubt the wisdom and kindness of the step which I was about to take; but there was no withdrawal; the die was cast, and to flinch from that which I had volunteered to perform I felt would be unmanly, and could issue only in disgrace.

Having torn myself from the embraces of my family, I bent my steps towards the railway, with the intention of riding down to Blackwall, which place I soon reached. On my arrival here, however, I felt a little mortified at having to wait till two o'clock, P.M., before a steamer left for Gravesend. I therefore retired to an inn, where I had time for reflection. I then felt what a glorious thing it was for man, when he has ever present with him a high, a noble, an unselfish motive—what an incentive it was to exertion,

perseverance, and self-denial—what a force to urge him on to ever-increasing efforts. Fears that might otherwise appal, discouragements that might dishearten, labours that would weary, obstacles that would dismay, opposition that might crush, temptation that might overcome—all lie disarmed and powerless, when, with a single-hearted and worthy aim, he struggles for the victory. Not having been born to honour, wealth, and luxury, I felt it my duty to endeavour, by persevering efforts, to overcome the disadvantages of my position.

The steamer at length left for Gravesend. Nothing particular occurred on our passage down the river, except a quarrel between an Englishman and an American, which fortunately ended without blows being struck on either side. The latter was a mate of some vessel. The weather was extremely foggy — a genuine November day. My spirits, if possible, were at the time much more gloomy than the weather. The golden tints of autumn had faded away before the approach of winter. No day ever appeared more wretched to me. Everything around seemed cheerless in the extreme.

I reached my immediate destination at half-past four, and jumping into a waterman's boat, I had soon climbed the side of the good ship destined to receive me. I felt a little vexed at the idea of being charged two shillings for the five minutes' work of the waterman, but this was mercy itself compared with the impositions which I was fated to experience on reaching Australia. It was now getting dark, and on walking into the cabin I was at once welcomed by such of my companions as were present. The remainder of them were gone ashore, but very soon returned, one of them being accompanied on board by his father, who was a captain in the army. I felt delighted to see him again, having made his acquaintance several months previously, and found him to be a highly respectable and honourable person. We all chatted together, and made ourselves as cheerful as we could under the circumstances, each one

doing his best to enliven the spirits of those who seemed disposed to droop. After supper we made up a bed for our worthy guest, who had promised to stay till the following morning. We were compelled to stow the soldier away in rather a confined space; but old warriors are not so easily incommoded by trifling matters like these; and our worthy friend, in particular, had been accustomed many years before to rough it, both in Australia and Van Diemen's Land, at a time when home comforts were utterly unknown.

November 11th.—Our little party began to bestir themselves this morning as soon as the cabin admitted of sufficient light to see each other, as our military visitor intended leaving us early. After his departure, I endeavoured to calm my mind as much as was possible under existing prospects. I strove also to rouse my companions to a proper sense of the duties before us; fully believing, as I do, that it is a duty incumbent on all persons to endeavour to add to the happiness of those around, and that we can never be so happy in this world as when we are striving to make others partake of such blessings as we ourselves may be in the possession and enjoyment of. By this time the passengers were generally stirring, and breakfast was announced; but, alas! few of us could boast of any appetite. There was very little food consumed at the meal, except by the captain, officers, and ship's company, who were not quite so delicate as us landsmen, and whose feelings, probably, were not so easily wrought upon by leaving home and kindred behind. Independently of the pilot, who had just arrived for the purpose of conducting the vessel into the Channel, I found that there were nineteen passengers on board, of whom seventeen were gentlemen and two ladies, all of whom were in the cabin, there being no steerage passengers on board. There were twenty-four in the ship's company, including the captain, mates, stewards, boys, and sailors. Thus we had on board altogether, forty-three souls, who were anxiously looking forward to the time when they should set their feet on the shores of Australia.

The morning turned out rainy, with a cold wind blowing from the north-east. We were then gilding slowly down the river, passing on our way a great number of vessels, of various sizes, from all parts of the civilized world, which were slowly working up the river for the Metropolis of the British Empire. We reached the Nore by half-past two, P. M., and there cast anchor, as the pilot feared a squall was coming on. I scarcely remember how the remainder of the afternoon was spent; but on taking a cup of tea in the evening, we all seemed much more light-hearted; and when the sound of a musical instrument fell upon our ears, it awoke pleasant and responsive feelings in our breasts. It happened to be one of our own party who was seized with this most welcome musical fit. He had fortunately learnt how to play upon the flute, and had sufficient energy left in him thus to cheer himself, and at the same time endeavour to gladden the hearts of those around him. Our friend played away, and the longer he blew the better did he play, and the more enlivening was its influence on all who heard it. We all felt grateful for this little treat, and more especially as we were necessitated to remain at anchor all night. We all retired to rest in good time, and in much better spirits than I had anticipated a few hours previously.

November 12th.—All the passengers appeared better this morning. I must confess, however, that I believed myself to be as bad as, if not worse than, any one on board. I had been able to get no rest all night, arising partly from face-ache, and probably the heart-ache had something to do with it. Our gallant ship was lying at anchor all day, from the wind being both adverse and very strong. It blew great guns, as the sailors say, which caused the ship to pitch and roll about fearfully, with the waves dashing against her side, and sending the spray repeatedly up over the poop. The vessel also drifted from her anchorage, for a short time, which produced great alarm and sickness among many of the passengers. I freely confess that I felt and

thought more about the comfortable home I had so recently left, than about the safety of the vessel, or the lives of those on board.

November 13th.—When we rose from our beds, and had taken our breakfast, I fancied we were all in rather better spirits than when we retired to rest on the previous night. It was quite calm till noon to-day, the wind blowing from the south-west. We were taken in tow by our old friend the steam-tug; and on weighing anchor, another one was laid hold of, and brought up nearly to the surface of the water, but it then became disentangled from our anchor, and fell to the bottom once more. Very few of the passengers had as yet made their appearance on deck. The two ladies—a widow and her daughter—already suffered very much from sea-sickness.

We were off Dover at three o'clock, and were beginning to flatter ourselves that there was some chance of getting down Channel. It transpired that there were several on board whose hearts already began to fail them, and who would gladly return if their passage money was recoverable. Poor faint-hearted mortals! how can they hope to succeed anywhere? We continued our course till seven o'clock, at which hour the pilot took a glass of grog to warm the inner man, and, after wishing all good-bye, jumped into a boat and went ashore, intending to take the railroad for London. The ship being now in charge of the captain, made way with a fair wind for about an hour more, and then we were vexatiously becalmed for the remainder of the night.

November 14th.—Sunday morning, at daylight, we sighted Dungeness; and with a moderate breeze blowing from the south-west, made a little head way down Channel. The weather proved showery all the forenoon. Most of the passengers were much better to-day. I went on deck for the first time since the night I entered the ship. We sighted Beachy-head, and bid adieu to the land as the vessel was fast hastening southward. We saw many vessels run-

ning up Channel to-day, as the wind proved favourable to those sailing in that direction.

After all my forgetfulness, I had presence of mind enough left to pay a little attention to the ladies to-day. I felt pleased with their company; their presence on the deck for the first time was most agreeable to me. I lent them my telescope, and paid them such other little attentions as their lonely position demanded. It was very pleasing to see most of the passengers reading some book suitable to the sanctity of the day. We had no church-service read over by the captain, as we anticipated. We all began to feel more at home with the captain now than at first, he being rather reserved in his manners and conversation; but I believe, from what I hear and know about him, that he is an excellent seaman, and he certainly pays great attention to us both by night as well as by day.

We were tossed about greatly again this evening, so that no one seemed inclined to eat anything. Sea-sickness is certainly much worse than any other kind of vomiting which I ever experienced on the land.

November 15th.—Exceedingly rough all last night. The poor sailors had a dreadful drenching, from the waves dashing over the forecastle. I caught sight of this most picturesque place to-day. The dim light issuing from the old rusty oil-lamp had scarcely strength to penetrate between the hammocks, which are slung up at each end by cords fastened to the deck, and which swing to and fro when the ship is in motion, so that this peculiar bed has the advantage of being always horizontal. This is emphatically the sailor's bed. The weather continued still rough, with a foul wind. We were steering towards the coast of France till 4 o'clock P.M., at which time the wind shifted, and enabled us to sail westward all the following night. I must still complain of being ill. I take a little arrowroot, which is the most I can do in the eating way at present.

November 16th.—We sighted Jersey and the coast of

France this morning, steering eastward along the latter coast from ten o'clock A.M., till three o'clock P.M. Sighted Normandy this evening, at which time we encountered a foul wind, and were knocking about all the night without making any progress at all.

November 17th.—This morning we were tossed about fearfully, opposite Plymouth, but out of sight of land, and were tacking about all the latter part of the day without doing any good.

November 18th.—At two o'clock this morning, the ship being put about, we were dashed about furiously, sometimes on our heads and then again on our feet, so that few of the passengers got the slightest rest. This state of things continued till noon to-day. The ship then shaped her course towards the coast of Cornwall, till three o'clock P.M., when we were driven back by a foul wind, in sight of Portland, which lasted till the following morning. This tossing about has made us ill again.

November 19th.—Fair wind at day-break, and steering due west all day, which is a treat after encountering so much foul weather. I laid in bed all day, not being able to rise. Some are a little out of temper, which I think great folly, as it will not change the wind. The weather continued rough and adverse for several days.

On the evening of the 21st, after a calm and pleasant day, a fair wind sprung up, which took us towards the Bay of Biscay. The sea being very rough all night, and throughout the day following, we were steering south-west by west. The sea looked extremely grand. It had the appearance of huge rolling mountains. So much swell was there, that the captain said it was probable we might not see it run so high again during the whole voyage. Our old ship, though not one of the fastest, is nevertheless a very buoyant and safe vessel. She leaps over the waves well; but is at this present time very much over on her larboard side. Several passengers had the ill luck to fall on the deck to-day, and one of them had the misfortune to get a black

eye through his fall. In fact, few could stand firmly upon their legs.

On the 23rd of the month we were steering due west, and within two hundred miles of the coast of Ireland. It is but little head-way we have made as yet; but as we have managed to clear the Channel, there is now some hope of progressing more favourably.

At three o'clock to-day we sighted a small Dutch vessel. She bore down upon us in order to ascertain the longitude we were in at that time. She proved to be a sloop, and appeared a mere boat in comparison with our stately ship, which was one of 700 tons burden. It really was a pretty sight to see this little barque tossed about like a cork on the crest of the great billows, for the sea was running very high at the time, so that her hull would often, for a few moments, be out of sight as she went down into the deep trough between the mighty waves.

At four o'clock P.M., a north-west gale began to blow, and we were again tossed about tremendously all night, so much so that no one could sleep. Most of the passengers were greatly alarmed, while the noise of a large rope continually flapping against the sides of the ship made us all more timid than we otherwise should have been. The gale lasted all night. The second cutter boat was well-nigh washed overboard. I felt very grateful to hear the sound of the bell on the morning of the 24th, for the dead lights of our cabin being let down, we were in total darkness, and knew nothing of the time till we heard the striking of the ship's bell. This turned out a much finer day than we had for some time been favoured with. In the afternoon we sighted two vessels, but both were a great distance from us. In the evening the weather proved much pleasanter than for several days past, but on the day following it was wet and boisterous, which made me very unwell, as it did most of my companions. It continued very rough all the following night, accompanied with a foul wind, which lasted till two o'clock P.M., at which time we were favoured with

a fair wind that did us all good, as it seemed to sharpen up our appetites to a keener edge than usual; for almost ever since we had been on board, one meal a day had satisfied most of the passengers. A gentleman passenger had the misfortune to fall down and hurt his side very much to-day, but, fortunately, no bones were broken, and he is consequently likely to do well.

November 27th.—A lovely morning was this, and the finest day we had experienced since leaving our native land. No vessel had been seen for several days past. I amused myself to-day in assisting the sailors to pump out the ship—an exercise which I found did me much good.

The following morning we descried the southernmost coast of Spain, and sighted two vessels. At noon we fell in with numbers of porpoises. At night a gale of wind sprung up, and the sea washing over the poop, broke a pane of glass belonging to the sky-light. I heard the broken pieces rattle down at midnight. Most of us had but a poor night's rest.

November 29th.—The sea was running mountains high to-day, and the wind blowing very strong till about noon, at which time it moderated a little, so that our gallant ship did ten knots an hour. On the morning of the 28th we descried a sail about five miles a-head of us. We came up to her at four o'clock P.M., exchanged colours, and spoke with her. She proved to be the barque "Condor," from London, bound for Madras, and had experienced the ill-luck to lose her jib-boom during the late squall. She had left London eighteen days.

December 1st.—Was ushered in with a fine day, and the ship going her proper course. The day following also smiled on us. We were in the latitude of Madeira to-day, but no land was in sight. The sailors brought some biscuit on the deck in order to dry it, it having become moistened by salt water during the rough weather a few days before. We all had a good laugh this afternoon, which I think proved beneficial to all. The occasion of it was as follows. Three

passengers having climbed aloft, they were spied out by the sailors, who very soon tied them up with ropes, and kept them there until they should either pay the usual fine or promise to do so. The fine, I believe, is limited to a bottle of grog. On the day after the fun spoken of, one of my companions brought out his rifle, when we all indulged ourselves with a shot at a bottle floating astern; no one, however, hit it, it being very difficult to fire accurately when the ship is in motion.

I have just seen the vacant place in the ship's bulwarks carried away during the last gale we encountered. This afternoon we spoke with the barque "Ruble" from St. Petersburg, bound to Rio Janeiro. The following day proved very fine; the thermometer rose to 75° in the shade. We saw the barque astern of us nearly all day, but by evening we had outstripped her, and were quite out of sight. Had more rifle shooting again to-day. About forty shots were fired at a bottle attached to a line about sixty yards long, which was dragged along at the stern of the vessel. The captain and I were the only persons who touched it. He shot through the board, and I, as a settler, knocked off the bottle.

Nothing particular occurred worth noticing till the seventh of the month, when we saw two fine whales, about fifty feet in length. It was a novel sight to most of us, and all the passengers seemed delighted with it.

December 9th.—The weather proved warm, accompanied with a fair wind, which sent our vessel along about eight knots an hour. On the day following the captain had a little fun with one of the passengers, a Belgian gentleman—by putting a red herring on a hook, and pretending that it was actually caught as it appeared when drawn up from the sea. The gentleman very innocently stated that he had seen white herrings as they were taken from the sea, but had never before seen "red" ones. There were great numbers of flying-fish seen to-day. These were the first I had ever beheld. I saw hundreds to-day, as they leaped out of the water to escape from the jaws of the golden

dolphin. It was a truly pretty sight to watch them as they glided along a few feet from the water's edge, touching the surface ever and anon as they proceed. It struck me, while gazing on the graceful movements of this interesting little fish, that many artists are accustomed to over-colour their representations of it. Since crossing the tropic of Cancer, I have frequently noticed the Portuguese man-of-war, as it is commonly called. It has a transparent membrane, or sail, as some term it. It is of a light-brown colour when seen in cloudy weather, but on a clear bright day it assumes a beautiful bright pink tinge. It sustains no harm in skimming or being tossed about on the surface of the water, as it is one of Ocean's peculiar progeny. I have also noticed, for weeks past, that light-footed little bird known among sailors by the fanciful appellation of Old Mother Carey's Chicken. It appears to be about the size of a swallow, and is not unlike one in its general appearance. It is certainly a beautiful sight to see these birds as they seem to stand for a moment on the surface of the water, and in the next moment are mounted several feet in the air. They follow the ship day after day and night after night, never seeming to grow weary.

When on a long voyage like this, most people find the time appear long—much more so than when on land. I have found, from my little experience of a sea-faring life, that the wisest plan to adopt, to destroy, as far as possible, the monotony and tedium of a long voyage, is to busy myself in reading, writing, or conversation; studying at all times to make myself agreeable to every one on board, as far as is consistent with the regulations of the ship, for there are times when it would be highly improper and even dangerous to chat with the sailors.

The next day (Dec. 11th) we sighted the island of St. Antonia, passing about thirty miles westward of it. Some of the passengers amused themselves by playing at quoits, formed of pieces of rope. An Irish gentleman made foils to fence with, and crossed them on the poop. I no

sooner took one of them in my hand than it was construed into a challenge on my part; and as we both had a slight knowledge of the art, it caused great excitement; indeed, a little play similar to that alluded to, or even very childish play, exercises a pleasing and useful influence upon the animal spirits, and has a tendency to disperse the clouds that gather around the mind during the monotony of so many weeks and months at sea. Most of us rendezvoused on the poop towards evening, as we found it the pleasantest time of the day. There we sat and sung till about ten o'clock, and then retired to rest.

December 12th.—A fine morning, with a beautiful breeze; our gallant ship gliding through the water about eight knots in the hour. At eight o'clock we sighted a vessel of some kind, but did not go near enough to exchange signals. At about the same hour we dimly descried one of the Cape Verde isles, about thirty miles eastward of our course, but could only just discern it so many miles off. We are now in latitude 13. N., and previous to our catching the north-east trade-winds, it may be well to remark, the breeze was continually shifting every hour of the day, which, I believe, is usual on either side of the equator. To-day is Sunday; and the loveliness of the morn was to us as a sweet emblem of this day of rest. Most of the passengers looked remarkably clean and neat; the majority of them employed themselves in reading, and, on the whole, were well behaved. Two Germans, however, towards evening, played at dominoes; but the captain very properly expressed his disapprobation of such an occupation on the Sabbath day.

December 13th.—This proved a very fine day, our ship running about eight knots an hour, with a fair wind for two days. On the 15th we were caught in a squall, succeeded by a tempest, which lasted till the 16th, when we became becalmed. I had now a little rest, and time to reflect and briefly remark upon the last few days. Whilst running before the wind, our Belgian friend (and a most warm-hearted one he was), laid a wager with the captain

about the speed of the vessel: but the reader may safely conjecture that the old sailor won the bottle of wine, as he knew much better than landsmen how fast the ship was going. The wind was blowing very hard about this time, which unfortunately split one of the sails; and, during twenty-four hours of that period, we run 188 knots, which all of us thought good speed for a vessel built on the old system. The thermometer had lately gone up to 86°, and then sunk to 83°; at which time we were visited with a squall which seemed to acquire a complete mastery over our wooden walls. This was quickly succeeded by a thunder-storm. Happily, however, the fury of the storm subsided somewhat in about two hours after its commencement, though the sea long continued to run mountains high. Fortunately, not a sea struck us, and our gallant craft rode out the storm right well. Awful and sublime as is a tempest, it inspires one with wonder and amazement at the terrible grandeur of the warring elements of nature and the wonders of nature's God. The lightnings flashed around us for some time, causing the most stout-hearted to tremble and to feel their insignificance.

December 16th.—Becalmed this morning from an early hour. The second mate came to my cabin to borrow a shark hook some time before daylight. It appeared from what he then said that he had caught hold of a shark, which had managed to break the hook and get away. I rapidly put on my clothes and went on deck, when we soon captured another shark; and had the pleasure of pulling him on to the quarter deck in safety, by slipping a rope over his tail. The gentleman splashed about on the deck hard enough to knock the timber to pieces, or to fracture one of our leg-bones had they been near him; but the sailors soon put an end to this peril by chopping off the creature's tail and fins. It was a young one, not quite six feet in length, but still quite old and long enough to have disposed of any one of us, had we fallen overboard. Instead of having the chance of eating any one of us, he

gave us the opportunity of tasting the flavour of his flesh. The great part of the passengers had a curiosity to try this novel dish when prepared. The wish was no sooner expressed than measures were taken by our cook to gratify it; but, personally, I could not relish it. I tasted it, like many others, and it certainly was a very nice sweet fish; and but for the idea which we associate with this voracious animal, I might have freely eaten half-a-pound of the flesh; but as it was, I was unable to swallow scarcely a morsel.

Our breakfast being over, we no sooner got on deck than we had the pleasure of seeing many dolphins playing about close to the ship's stern, which I thought a beautiful sight, as we had an opportunity of seeing them to such advantage. The captain baited a hook with a small piece of pork, and in less than half-an-hour we had the unexpected pleasure of seeing two caught and hauled upon the deck. They measured about four feet in length, and of course, like the shark, furiously flapped their tails on the deck until we took away their lives. The cook then dressed a portion of these also, of which many partook with great satisfaction. The sailors, with their tough stomachs, especially enjoyed the dainty dish.

We spoke with the barque "Ellen," from Newport, bound for San Francisco, in latitude 5° north. This occurred in the forenoon. It is always an exciting time for all on board to speak with a vessel after having been on the ocean for many weary weeks. It is a source of pleasure that can be appreciated only by those who have experienced a long voyage like this.

The day following we were still becalmed, and another fine shark was caught, which we conjectured to be about 11 feet in length; but as he bit the line asunder, and departed with some steel in its mouth, the monster never gave us the opportunity to make use of the foot rule. Numbers of porpoises were seen to-day, all swimming in one direction. The setting sun and gorgeous sky were very much to be admired this evening. No lover of nature could refrain from

gazing with delight on such a picture. The nights in these latitudes are extremely lovely, and especially so when accompanied by the round bright moon, rising like a globe of silver above our heads.

On the day after the calm we were somewhat cheered by a refreshing wind, which, being accompanied with rain, rendered the air much cooler. Many of the passengers slept on deck last night. I feared to do so myself, as the dew falls very heavy within the tropics, and the light of the moon has a tendency to injure the eyes. The sailors busied themselves in catching rain water in order to wash out their clothes. The heavy tropical rain which fell last night made such a noise that it sounded more like a stream poured down on the deck than anything else I can compare it to.

December 20th.—Fine morning and wind more favourable. The breeze freshened up towards the evening, which was supposed to be the desired south-east trade-wind. The rain came down very suddenly, which quickly drove us into the cabin for shelter. The weather continues very hot at a time when our friends in England are gathering around their cheerful firesides. We were favoured with a fair wind on the following day, which soon dispersed the ships we had seen within a few miles of us. The captain had the misfortune to break his spy-glass to-day; but having one in my possession almost equal to his, I readily gave it up for his use during the remainder of the passage—an offer which he gladly accepted. A large flock of birds was seen to-day; they assumed the appearance of crows in the distance. We fell in again with the barque "Ellen." Towards evening her crew began to make preparations for the usual fun when crossing the line. They first fired off their cannon, and then lighting a tar barrel, the sailors put it overboard, which was certainly a pleasing sight. They had no sooner done with their fun than we began ours, by repeating exactly what they had done; but, in addition to this, other mad pranks were added, such as throwing buckets of water over one another; as I retired to rest, however, at ten o'clock, I fortunately

escaped that ordeal. Most of the gentlemen kept up the practical joking till after midnight.

December 22nd.—This morning being fine and very warm, the sailors made great preparation for continuing the rough sports of the previous day, particularly that of shaving, which I believe is an old custom observed on crossing the line. The sailors fastened up sails, into which they put plenty of water for the purpose of plunging therein Old Neptune's customers, after they have been shaved. The sailors are the principal actors in this play, although they compel many others to take certain parts which oftentimes are not agreeable. I will endeavour to describe, briefly, how and in what manner old father Neptune has gained for himself so much popularity amongst those who have already crossed the line. In the first place, I must here state, that all those sailors who intend taking the leading parts in this ancient nautical comedy, dress themselves very carefully in whatever appears to them most uncommon. Old Neptune always takes the precedence, and gives his orders to the subordinates, who do the work. The ceremony in our case commenced just before noon. The old man was clad in garments suitable for such an occasion. I was an eye-witness of the ceremony until a certain point in the proceedings, when I deemed it advisable to beat a retreat, or I should myself have been exposed to the same barbarous rites, and have been shaved. The sailors manage to get all particulars concerning those on board, and when the name at the top of the list is read over, if the person should fail to step forward, he is soon laid hold of and forced up to the barber's shop extemporized for the occasion. It is here that the ceremony commences. The unfortunate person first to be dealt with according to old Neptune's law, has a handkerchief tied over his eyes. The old man then orders the sham doctor to feel his pulse, upon which this man of physic prescribes for him a more disgusting medicine than is to be found in any druggist's shop in the United Kingdom, namely, sheep's manure

dissolved in water, which is at once forced down the throat of the patient. After squeezing his nose most unmercifully, and satisfying himself that the draught is in the stomach of the unfortunate patient, the doctor then orders the barber to lather his face with the preparation at hand, consisting of tar mixed with a greasy matter, commonly called slush. The operator then takes a piece of rusty iron hoop, something like a hoe in shape, and scrapes off this greasy covering, though by no means so softly as many a London shaver would do it for a penny.

After this operation is performed to the entire satisfaction of the operating party, the patient is then dragged to the water already prepared for his reception. Being immersed, he is held under its surface till his breath is well nigh gone, after which he is allowed to make his escape on the opposite side, just as sheep will rush from the pool of water wherein they are washed previous to the shearing.

I looked on with disgust while several were thus treated, and then I retired to my cabin. When my turn came to be shaved, I refused to submit to such brutality; and the sailors coming to my cabin door to force me, I immediately took up a sword to intimidate them. This posture of self-defence led to a parley. On their promising not to handle me roughly, I ventured out, and was only compelled to taste a little clean water whilst blindfolded. They did not even dip me in the water. The virtue in the steel I suppose effected all this moderation.

I would not venture to affirm that all who cross the line, in all vessels, are served so bad as some of my fellow passengers; nor should I object to a little fun myself, if conducted in a proper manner; but when I see matters of the kind just alluded to carried to the same barbarous extent as they were centuries ago, I think it high time that this detestable custom should be exchanged for something more humane and rational.

CHAPTER III.

CONTINUATION OF VOYAGE—LANDING IN AUSTRALIA.

December 23rd.—The day after crossing the line, we were again favoured with a nice breeze. The sailors looked rather the worse for the grog, of which they had drunk too freely on the preceding evening. The succeeding day (the 24th) proved very hot. Flying fish again abounded, which were to be seen in hundreds, together with porpoises, rolling and sporting with the bows of our vessel. This being the day before Christmas, most of the passengers assembled together on the poop towards evening, and there made themselves as jovial as our peculiar circumstances would allow. As it is customary in Old England to make merry on the eve of Christmas, so here on the ocean we were as jocund for the time, probably, as many on the land. We sat and sang till almost midnight, before we separated, and retired to rest.

Christmas day at sea, away from all dear friends, brings with it melancholy thoughts ; all felt it, more or less, whether passengers, the captain, or the sailors. There was probably no one on board who had not some loved and loving ones to think of them, and to repeat his name in a kindly manner to those left far, far behind. All, no doubt, had either a sister or a brother, a father or a mother, a wife or a child, who, from the bosom of their happy homes, would follow them with their fond wishes and prayers. The day

however, with every drawback, was spent very pleasantly ; and judging from the smiling faces seen around the table, I think there must have been a mutual good understanding existing among the whole of our little party.

I was much gratified at being presented with a hat, a leathern belt, and a bowie knife, by a Belgian gentleman. The hat and belt I knew I should find very useful ; and as, according to the old adage, we should never look a gift-horse in the mouth, I would not despise the bowie knife, although I hoped never to have occasion to make use of it for the purposes for which it was originally intended.

December 27th.—Early this morning our vessel well nigh came in contact with another, supposed to be a French ship, of about 700 tons burthen. All the passengers were asleep at the time, or at least they were in their berths. If a collision had taken place, it would have been almost impossible for many to have been saved, as both vessels were going at the rate of seven or eight knots an hour. The escape was so narrow, that the sailors told me a person could easily have stepped from one to the other. The man whose duty it was to have been on the look-out, was actually found sleeping on the forecastle at the time. After hearing the particulars of our narrow escape from what might have proved a watery grave, I believe many expressed their gratitude for their safe deliverance, and made it the topic of conversation for a day or two afterwards.

December 29th.—This morning we sighted an outward-bound barque, which we neared at ten o'clock A.M., and exchanged signals with her, but at too great a distance to understand each other. Our gallant ship, although by no means a fast one, outstripped the barque during the day. Indeed, she has beaten, as yet, every one we have come alongside of. The thermometer stood at 84°, till a squall came on, accompanied by rain, which rendered the air much cooler.

The day after the squall, we sighted another vessel,

making several tacks within a short space of time. She was supposed to be a ship of war looking out for slavers. The captain is getting all the work done he possibly can, since he is doubtful whether the sailors will return again to England with him, although they are bound, according to law, to do so, having signed articles to that effect, and in consideration of which the owners of the vessel have agreed to pay them liberal wages.

I was much amused during the last day or two, to hear a fellow passenger—an intending gold-digger—speak of the large quantity of gold he anticipates getting before he returns to his native land. He intends to devote his attention and wealth to the purchase and training of race-horses, in which department he threatens to eclipse the most renowned frequenters of the turf.

December 31st.—The last day of an eventful year, and one, no doubt, which will be long remembered by many whose lives are spared to them. The weather continues exceedingly fine, with a favourable wind. This new-year's eve proved to be a very quiet one, some on board having made too much noise to please the captain. We had, therefore, no merry-making—no singing the old year out and welcoming the new one in. All retired quietly to rest; many of us musing, doubtless, as to what events the new year would have in store for us, and what we may be called upon to endure ere its termination.

January 1st, 1853.—The new year came in with charming weather to cheer us on our voyage. We sighted a home-ward-bound barque in the forenoon, about three miles to the leeward of us. Our ensign was hoisted, but to no purpose, as her captain did not return the compliment. The day after sighting the vessel just alluded to, we had the pleasure of seeing a water-spout, which to many was a novelty; though it so happened that I had seen one a few years previously.

January 4th.—The weather has been hot during the last few days; the thermometer rose to 85 degrees, till a shower

came down this morning and cooled the air. Spoke the schooner "Thane," of Fife, this morning, from Rio Janeiro, bound for Liverpool. On the following day I had the pleasure of seeing some bonito playing across the bows of the ship, whilst I was sitting, sailor-like, some distance out on the bowsprit.

January 7th.—A lovely morning, with a fair wind, which sprung up during the night. I soon found that the sailors were putting the ship about; I was also necessitated, by the pitching of the vessel, to put my head about, or lay with my heels upwards. There were many birds following the ship throughout the day, some of them of a very dark brown colour, with long slender wings, and about the size of crows in England; whilst others had more the appearance of the lapwing or peewit of our land. One of the passengers was exceedingly excited, so much so that I shall not hesitate to style him the wild Irishman, he being, without doubt, a native of the Emerald Isle. In the first place, when the fit came on him, he began by playing and romping with several people on deck, and before going below he actually tied together the arms and legs of one person whom he overpowered: then, to crown the whole, that he might be long remembered, he pushed some of the passengers down into the cabin; and because one person happened to stand in his way, he, without the slightest provocation, struck him on his eye so hard that it was many days ere it resumed its proper colour again.

January 9th.—Sunday morning, and the most unpleasant one we had experienced since our departure from home. About nine o'clock, the captain, being at that time on the poop, sent the mate to say he wished to speak with me. I accordingly waited on him, when, to my astonishment, he apprised me of there having been two watches lost from one of the cabins. He signified his intention to make a general search amongst the passengers for them, if I thought it prudent to do so. I immediately consented, and complimented him for taking the matter up in such a spirited manner. The plan

was carried out to the very letter; but, unfortunately, without producing the desired effect, except that it had a tendency to exonerate many who might otherwise have been wrongfully charged with the offence.

There were numerous whales around the ship to-day; one came close to us which many conjectured was seventy feet in length; it made a noise more like an elephant than otherwise.

January 10th.—The last few days have passed away without the occurrence of anything particularly worthy of notice, except that all continued in good health, and most of the passengers vied with each other to add cheerfulness to the wearisome sameness of a life at sea. I must not omit, however, to briefly describe the magnificent picture which many gazed upon on the previous evening. I refer to the setting sun, which in these latitudes is generally one of nature's grandest and most gorgeous spectacles. There are times, however, when it is to be more admired than at others, and the one looked upon on the evening in question was acknowledged, by all who saw it, to be one of the finest and most inspiring sights of the kind that they had ever seen. The sky assumed, in turns, various hues of the most indescribable beauty, such as crimson, rose-colour, orange, sapphire, pale green, etc., etc.; but to do any thing like justice to a picture so uncommon would require the brush of a Turner.

Having briefly alluded to our treat of last evening, I must now relate a little bird-catching exploit in which I was engaged. I rose from my bed about six o'clock, and finding that we were almost becalmed, with many large birds soaring around us, I, in company with others, provided myself with a line, having a strong fish-hook attached to one end, which we baited with a small piece of pork, at the same time fastening a piece of board near it in order to float it. After throwing it overboard, we let it drag astern of the vessel.

It had not been long floating on the water, before a bird caught sight of the bait and swallowed it, hook and all.

We at once drew in the line, with our prize made so fast that it was impossible for it to escape without breaking the line. As soon as our prey was safely on deck, we asked the carpenter to bring his foot-rule to ascertain the exact distance from one tip of its wing to the other, when expanded to their full extent. Many conjectured that five feet would be the outside width; but six feet six inches was the result of our measurement. This noble-looking bird was about the size of a goose, and not unlike one in its general appearance. The beak somewhat resembled that of a swan; its back and the upper part of the wings were of a dark brown colour, with all the under-parts as white as snow. One of my companions wishing to taste this ocean-bird, and the rest having agreed to partake of it when cooked, we set to work at once, and having cut it in pieces, soaked it in salt water before we cooked it. But after all our trouble in bringing it to table in a proper way, it proved very tough and strong-flavoured, so that few did more than merely taste it on account of its novelty.

Not long after this, we caught an albatross. This bird has long since joined us, and is daily seen in great numbers floating around the ship. This immense bird is very similar to the one I have endeavoured to describe, in its shape and colour, but is much larger than the one caught early this morning. When its wings were extended, they were found to measure ten feet and one inch from the tip of one to the tip of the other. The captain informed me that these giant birds have been caught much larger, and their wings, when extended, have been known to measure sixteen feet. They are now seen almost every day; many of them having plumage of dazzling whiteness, as unspotted as the lovely blue sky above our heads; while others are bedecked with dark brown breasts and wings, contrasting beautifully with the snowy whiteness of their companions in flight.

The following day, and the day after that, many of us were shooting at the albatross; but we failed to kill one. Shot seemed to be of no use whatever; I do not imagine

that it penetrated the large quantity of feathers in which the body of the bird is enveloped.

January 13th.—A beautiful morning. At eight o'clock, the course of the vessel was somewhat altered, in order to steer clear of Gough's Island, which we sighted about half-an-hour afterwards. At nine o'clock we were within four miles of it. It appeared nothing more than a barren rock, of about four or five miles in length. It presented a very picturesque appearance, rendered still more so by the surf, which was breaking upon its rocky shores. Although but a barren-looking spot, yet amid the vast wilderness of water around, it afforded us no little pleasure to stand on the deck, gazing on it till it receded from our sight altogether. The island appeared to be frequented by swarms of birds. In the after-part of the day, we passed a ship's mast floating on the water, with spars and sails attached to it. It was conjectured that some unfortunate vessel must have been wrecked on the island just referred to, as the rigging we saw appeared to be drifting from that direction.

January 15th.—The morning was fine, but the wind gradually freshened till it blew great guns, as the sailors say; the sea at the same time running mountains high. This state of things lasted all night, and continued throughout the whole of the following day, the waves pitching and tossing us about fearfully. Every now and then the sea broke over the whole length of the ship; but, after our seafaring experience, we managed to brave the rough weather without great inconvenience. This afternoon a gentleman, who had voyaged to India and back to England, ere he accompanied me on this trip, pointed out to me a little bird, called the stormy petrel. As this little bird and the one called Mother Carey's chicken are often confounded together, I may be pardoned for stating that I believe the one to be entirely distinct from the other. The last-named bird is smaller than the stormy petrel, and flies on the breast of the ocean very differently from the other.

January 17th.—We had violent storms to encounter nearly the whole of the previous night, and had the ill-luck to have a boom and studding-sail carried away and lost altogether. The wind continued to blow hard till the latter part of the day, when it sunk into a calm, which lasted till the next morning.

January 18th.—Towards night, we were favoured with a nice breeze, which sent our good ship along in a manner highly satisfactory to the passengers. The succeeding day brought with it very different weather to what we have experienced for many weeks past. It was very hazy all the early part of the day. Towards evening we were greatly amused to see the porpoises sporting about the vessel. They were very handsome, with streaks of white along their sides.

January 21st.—This morning the weather was foggy, not very unlike a November day in old England. Towards noon the mist cleared away, and the day turned out fine. As the sun went down, however, the rain descended for a few hours, and the wind gradually died away, so that we could do very little till the next evening, when the wind freshened up again, which sent us merrily along.

From the evening of the 22nd to the morning of the 26th, we had variable winds to contend with. The weather at times was very misty, with occasional showers of rain, which proved very valuable to the sailors, who contrived to catch a moderate supply of soft water, in which to wash out some of their clothing. The captain about this time issued orders to keep a sharp look-out for icebergs. In these latitudes, it appears, they are often to be seen.

January 26th.—I saw a Cape pigeon to-day for the first time. There were also a great many other kinds of birds visible during the day. The weather became much cooler; indeed, one of the passengers brought down from the poop a piece of ice in the early part of the 27th. Much hail and snow too fell during the night, accompanied with strong wind, so much so that a studding sail and the

flying jib were carried clean away during the night. The sea for hours was running high; and the grandeur of the sight induced me to sit on the deck, and gaze upon the sublime ocean. The gale blowing too strongly to carry much canvas, the sailors were busy furling the sails. Poor fellows! I often felt a strong sympathy for them, especially in the darkness of the midnight watch, when the weather was piercingly cold, and they were compelled by duty to go aloft to reef the sails, which they would do with unmurmuring cheerfulness.

This evening a tremendous sea came sweeping over our poop, filling the cuddy and several cabins half full of water for a few moments, till the motion of the ship caused the bulk of it to run off the deck again. I happened to be in the forecastle at the time, chatting with the boatswain and carpenter. The water very soon paid me a visit too, and compelled me to mount hastily upon a large sea-chest, to keep myself as dry as possible.

January 29th.—A fine bright morning—a treat again, for a certainty, after the knocking about we had to endure two days and nights. We now all took to our winter clothing in right good earnest, both by day and night, as we began to feel the cold much more on the sea, in these latitudes, than we should have done in a parallel latitude on the land, where we could take proper exercise. Our two lady companions had not been able to present themselves on the deck lately, in consequence of the roughness of the weather. Many times during the night, when we have been unable to sleep, there were few who did not readily joined in a laugh on hearing the various articles rolling about from one side of the vessel to the other. Every time the ship lurched, away went every article left loose on the previous evening, and on turning back again there was a similar noise, so that while those things remained unlashd, this sort of wild sea music was continually to be heard.

I have already remarked that the captain had ordered a

sharp look-out to be made for icebergs—the importance of which all knew how to appreciate this evening. It was shortly after the sun had descended below the horizon, that the sailor whose duty it was to be watching ahead, shouted out lustily, “Iceberg in sight!” This exclamation roused the passengers thoroughly, and produced general excitement on board, since very few, excepting the captain, had seen any before. I was, at the time, partly undressed, and thinking of retiring to rest; but after hearing what was up, I instantly put on my clothes and sprang upon the poop, where we could discern our dangerous neighbour very plainly. It was a lovely moonlight night, which gave us an opportunity of seeing this beautiful object to advantage. It was a sight of such rare occurrence that few would fail to admire it, even though they had gazed on similar objects before. We passed about two miles to the leeward of the iceberg; and from the information I could gather on board the ship, it was supposed to be about one hundred and twenty feet high from the surface of the water; therefore, when we bear in mind that such a mass of ice has two-thirds of its depth under water, this immense mass of congealed water would have an entire elevation of about three hundred and sixty feet. The length was conjectured to have been about four hundred feet, which would have been as bad for us to have run the vessel against as a rock of a similar size. This happened to be seen on a Saturday evening; and truly thankful were we all for the vigilance and foresight which our good captain evinced, in causing a sharp look-out to be made, otherwise, had the night been dark, we might have all found a watery grave.

January 30th.—Sunday morning is a time when many feel the loss of the company of those near and dear ties of nature that bind all tender-hearted ones to this transitory world. It arouses the feelings and exalts the aspirations of those who are partakers of that grace which bringeth salvation, and which is a light sent us to lighten our paths, and to guide and comfort us during our pilgrimage

on earth. Thoughts of a profitable character must necessarily arise in the breast of every devout and right-minded person, and especially so when far away from their native country. Then it is that the many pleasant Sabbaths they were wont to spend in their respective places of worship, in the dear father-land, will rush upon the soul.

One of our lady friends ventured on deck to-day, and had not been there long before she unluckily met with a clumsy fall. The ship was rolling fearfully at the time, and sent her to the opposite side of the poop. No sooner had she slid there, than the succeeding motion sent her back again very quickly, but fortunately without producing any serious result, except that of being much alarmed. Towards the evening we encountered a squall, the ship running before the wind, under close-reefed top-sails, at a great rate. The sea at this time was awfully grand. I could have hung on tightly to the vessel, and gazed upon it for hours, had not the weather become so exceedingly cold. It was a truly magnificent sight.

January 31st.—The night just passed proved to be one very alarming to us landsmen. I believe we had more tossing about for the time being than we had experienced since leaving the British Channel. The sea swept fearfully over the deck at times, and sent a tar barrel, and various other things, rolling about, the noise of which had a tendency to increase our fears. For my own part I entertained serious thoughts of meeting with a speedy death, which I must confess gave me a great shock; but Providence again favoured us, and the dawn of another day allayed all our fears. I lay in my close bed awake during the greater part of the night. I heard a tremendous sea sweep over the poop, and which, as I afterwards learned, well-nigh washed the poor helmsman into the ocean. Had such a calamity occurred, it would have been an impossibility for him to have been saved, as no boat could have lived at that time in the raging sea. After this narrow escape the necessary means were resorted to, in order to prevent any

dread on that account for the remainder of the night, by lashing to the vessel the man whose duty it devolved on to stand at the wheel. The poor sailors were much worse off than any one else, as their duties kept them up all night, and not one had any dry clothes on his back; while, to make matters still worse, the water had got into their berths, and there was enough on the floor to swim their boxes about the forecastle. At daylight, however, the sea moderated, although the water still continued in great commotion.

February 1st.—We were tossed about very much again all last night, although not so much as on the previous one. The morning broke fine, with a fair wind, and our gallant ship tore through the water at the rate of nine knots within the hour. She had done 204 miles during the past twenty-four hours. I felt obliged to visit the cook to-day in his department (the galley), in order to get a warming. As very little exercise could possibly be taken here, I suffered more than some others with the cold. It was rather cheering to see the boatswain busying himself in preparing various kinds of tackling, to be in readiness for unloading the vessel on her arrival at Sydney.

February 2nd.—A wet, and what the sailors term a nasty, morning, which continued so throughout the day, the decks being in consequence very slippery. Favoured with a fair wind again, and although much tossed about, few now cared little for it, as it was driving us in the right direction. One of the poor grunterns was actually killed to-day in order to save its life; or rather, perhaps, I ought to state that the knife was stuck in its throat without producing the desired effect, and the poor brute failed to complain of that treatment which is so natural for animate flesh and blood generally to do. The poor pig, who had the doctor yesterday morning to prescribe gruel for him to eat, and a fire to lie near, and who was afterwards forced to resign his breath ere the knife was tried upon him, submitted to be chopped up to-day without making more or less noise than he did when the knife was applied to his throat yesterday. The

captain did himself the honour of cutting it up in joints, to please, if possible, the most fastidious; but after all this ceremony, I fancy few would like to partake of such a treat. I was truly sorry to hear the sailors complain so bitterly of the provisions they had served out to them, and many boldly declare their intention of deserting the ship the first opportunity that offers. I trust, however, that may not be the case. I afterwards heard that they had some better provisions served out to them, in consequence of their threats to strike at once if not rationed with food fit to be eaten. I was delighted to hear of this pleasing change, as we might otherwise have been in a sad predicament if the sailors had actually refused to work.

I was cheered rather at the idea of not going farther south; the ship now steered due east, and on the noon of the 6th, we found ourselves ten miles more to the north. Thousands of small birds might be seen following in the track of the whale to-day, named after that monster of the deep. We saw the grampus, too, cleaving his way through the living waters. About this time the boatswain had the misfortune to let a large piece of iron fall on his foot, which crushed one toe very much. I always have great sympathy with any of the sailors whenever they are obliged to tie up either hand or foot, as the necessary nursing appendages are not often within their reach.

The day after this, one of the apprentice boys had a severe beating; and richly did he deserve all the lashing the second mate bestowed upon him, there being abundant scope for improvement in every sense of the word. This lad refused to turn out, or rather he would not do so at the proper time; and as he had frequently been threatened with a few lashes unless reformation took place, this was a favourable plea for Mr. ——— to put his threat into execution. This lad chews and smokes tobacco quite as much as any of the men. He is very dirty in his habits, and this filthy tobacco-chewing has no tendency to render him more cleanly. What added more to the anger of his

superior was, that this stripling had the audacity to deal out threats and oaths to him, which caused the lash to be laid on his back much more heavily and frequently than it otherwise would have been. The flogging caused great excitement for the time, and we all hoped that there might be no further cause for a repetition of the chastisement.

February 8th.—The weather is generally gloomy now; the sun being for the greater part of the day obscured. The sailors, unhappily, are often heard to swear and utter dreadful oaths, although they are generally very civil to the passengers. They very often engage at play towards the evening, except when they are on duty. I have seen them throwing at each other anything they could lay their hands upon, such as grease, pork, mops, mats, buckets of water, etc. They all seem to keep their temper very well, even when they happen to get a bucket of water, or any dirty matter, thrown over them. Most people get very filthy on board ship, unless they are very particular, and they are almost certain to spoil all their outer garments with grease and tar. For my own part, I change my outer clothing as little as I possibly can, knowing that any cloth apparel will not be fit to wear again on landing. But my linen I like to change as often as my stock will allow me, it being so very refreshing to do so. Many passengers at times play a simple game of cards in order to while away an hour or two. I have merely played one game of cribbage, which will be the first and last all through the voyage from England to Sydney, as I can find various amusements which may prove more profitable, such as noting down the incidents which daily occur amongst our little party, in addition to whatever information I glean from others on board. It is quite laughable at times, when the cook gets the galley so much crowded as to be unable to do his work, to see the tricks to which he has recourse. He will contrive to get some one outside to close one door, when, seizing the opportunity, he throws some pepper upon the hot sheets of iron, and at the same moment pops out and

closes the other door after him. The fumes from the burnt pepper soon become insufferable, so that the intruders are glad to beat a precipitate retreat; and it will generally be some time before they expose themselves to a second dose of the kind. I happened myself one day to be on this forbidden ground, and whilst in the act of warming myself I experienced similar treatment. I was obliged to put my mouth against a hole in one of the doors, to catch the fresh air, otherwise it would have almost suffocated me. The dose was not intended for me, as the cook and I were upon excellent terms with each other; and he expressed his regret at the occurrence, stating that it should not have happened had he been aware of my presence at the time.

For the information of those who may ever be taking a voyage to any of the British Colonies in the south, it may perhaps not be amiss to mention that in some latitudes there is a variation of the compass, so that it does not always point to the north, as is generally supposed.

February 9th.—This proved to be a fine day; and the weather being milder, enabled us all to stay on deck rather more than we had done of late. The wind proved rather squally last night, and caused a studding-sail boom to break asunder. The carpenter, however, prepared a new one, ready to be used whenever it may be required. The sailors called out this afternoon that those who wished to get to Sydney must come and pull a rope. I was sitting by the galley fire warming myself at the time, and thinking that a little vigorous exercise might tend to circulate my blood, I ran to the post without delay, and had no sooner laid hold of the rope than other passengers followed my example. The sailors are funny fellows, and are constantly bestowing their good-natured jokes upon us.

When I was at the galley in the evening, endeavouring to catch a little warmth from the fire, I heard three of the sailors chatting to each other. The exciting subject of the gold robbery, which had taken place on board a vessel in

Hobson's Bay having been broached by them, caused me to listen very attentively. It so happened that the youngest of these three tars was on board our ship at the time of the robbery, and which lay at anchor close to the stern of the one which the thieves had boarded and plundered. There were only five men on board at the time. These the seven sturdy robbers seized one by one, and after tying their legs and arms together, put four out of the five into that part of the ship called a lazaret, while the fifth contrived to conceal himself from their sight. They then proceeded to take away a large quantity of gold, which was packed in small boxes, about the size of an ordinary cigar box. Our gallant ship at the time, it appears, had taken in about seven thousand ounces, to convey to the mother country; the captain, therefore, after what had happened, might well feel somewhat alarmed for the safety of this golden treasure, and gave his orders accordingly for its protection. Notwithstanding the serious nature of the affair described by the young sailor, I could not help being amused to hear him relate the measures adopted to scare away all depredators, should they attempt to board the vessel previous to its leaving the bay. Every night after dark, two dummies were clad to imitate sailors, one of whom was placed at each end of the ship. In addition to these valiant defenders, however, two real men were on duty, each one having a dummy for a companion during the whole of his watch; there could, therefore, be very little fear of the sentinels talking too loud to each other. The two flesh-and-blood sentinels, I understand, were entrusted with a loaded musket each, but the wooden ones were not allowed the chance of firing. These two armed sailors were ordered, if they saw any boat approach very near, and did not receive satisfactory replies to certain questions which they were authorised to put, to fire a shot over their heads; and further, if this failed to elicit the object of their approach, then these two brave sailors were to fire at the men in the boat, and immediately drop down, in order that

their wooden companions might receive the fire of the enemy. Then, before the robbers could climb up the side of the ship, an immense stone was all ready prepared to roll down from the gangway into the boat, and perchance on to the heads of the intruders; but failing to do this, it would no doubt have sunk the boat to the bottom of the bay.

February 12th.—We were very unpleasantly tossed about all last night, so that very few could sleep. The sea is still running very high, and at times breaks over the deck; we are consequently often getting a wetting whilst tumbling about on the deck. The cook is in great trouble about his cooking utensils sliding about so much, which almost tires the patience of the little man. The steward, too, comes in for his share of trials to-day. He has been seen to fall with dishes in his hand while sliding across from one side of the ship to the other, and of course, under such circumstances, the crockery gets wofully smashed. The weather has proved hazy for some days past. On the 13th, we believed ourselves to be in the longitude of Western Australia—a discovery which sounded very cheering to most of us passengers.

February 14th.—This turned out a much pleasanter day than we had experienced for several weeks past, although we were becalmed from the early part of it until noon, when the wind freshened up a little, causing the vessel to glide along about ten knots an hour. We were able once more to pace the deck very comfortably. On hearing that Mr. Shark was prowling about the vessel, I mustered courage to venture out on the bowsprit—a thing rather unusual for me—hoping that I might catch sight of this enemy of mankind. I own to being rather more excited than customary; the fact of the day being my birth-day will help to account for my feeling somewhat more elevated than on ordinary occasions. I could do no less than treat my friends to a glass of wine upon the strength of this happy anniversary, and endeavoured to make them as

comfortable as the peculiarities of my position at that time allowed me.

This evening, after dark, we all enjoyed the treat of beholding the southern lights, or Aurora Borealis, which were incessantly sending up their luminous streaks for about an hour. It was truly a grand spectacle, and much more beautiful than any thing of the kind I had ever seen previously in the northern latitudes.

February 16th.—A little showery this morning; but as I can see the yards square and the studding-sails set, I rest contented about the wind being fair, as those are signs not now to be mistaken by any of us, and which are at all times cheering to those who wish to get on land again; and I presume to say that there is only one exception among the passengers to this rule, and that happens to be one of my companions, who rather likes this indolent sort of life, on account of his not having any urgent business to perform. But, then, he is by no means the sort of person to take an adventurous trip of this kind, nor should I have allowed such an one to join me, had I more fully known his character previous to leaving home.

I find that the sailors are busy preparing to enter port. They are getting out the sounding lines, tackling of various kinds, and the long boat, in which they killed no fewer than fourteen rats.

We have run 189 miles during the last twenty-four hours. We are tossed about very much again, the wind blowing hard. It would seem that the vessel ever fails to please us, and will do so, I presume, until she lands us in safety on the shore of Australia.

When the wind is gentle, we complain of not going fast enough; and, on the other hand, when it is blowing strong, we are tossed about too much to be agreeable; so that blow gentle, or blow strong, it never suits the tastes and tempers of all parties. In the evening, however, the wind blew strong enough to carry away another studding-sail boom, which the sailors think very little of, as they say,

"It's only a job for Chips (the carpenter) to make another." Fortunately, we brought away plenty of spare ones, which have been found indispensable.

The sailors have been scolding the cook for not keeping the copper clean, wherein he cooks their food. They told him they should not speak to the skipper (captain) any more, and went so far as to say that unless it was kept in proper order he must expect to be put into the copper himself, which would not be more than his deserts. However, I should hope that it will end in threats, and the doctor (cook) in future be more cleanly in that particular.

February 21st.—Last night proved a squally one, so that very few slept much. I acknowledge to have been one who had a sleepless night; and, in fact, as we are anticipating seeing the land very shortly, sleep is getting quite out of fashion with us. It was reported in the evening that we were likely to see land before morning; I therefore requested to be called up if such should prove to be the case.

February 22nd.—A sleepless night for me again. The weather mild, with occasional showers in the morning, accompanied by a strong wind blowing from the west-by-north, which caused our gallant ship to sail very much on her starboard side. The captain and officers were keeping a sharp look-out for the coast of Van Diemen's Land early this morning; and about eleven o'clock we were transported with joy by beholding land without the aid of a telescope. We sailed parallel with the south-eastern and eastern coast throughout the remainder of the day. It appeared, in the distance, a bold-looking coast, with a continuous line of hills very near the water's edge, and not unlike the Sussex South Downs in England, when viewed from the northern side. Towards evening, the wind veered round to the south, which gave the passengers an opportunity of pulling the ropes once more in order to square the yards—the sailors all the time looking on.

February 24th turned out a lovely morning, and the

weather much warmer. We were going due north in the fore-part of the day, but the wind veering round enabled us to steer north-east, which course was more favourable to point the head of our vessel towards the coast of New Holland. The ship's crew are very busy getting up the chain cables and putting the anchor over the bows of the vessel, which affords us no little pleasure, as it is a sure sign of their being used before long.

The moon was about full just at this time; and being exquisitely clear on this coast, the mackerel sky, with the twinkling stars continually peeping out at every break of the spotted clouds, produced a charming picture, and one that could not possibly escape the admiring eyes of any lover of natural scenery. Most of my fellow passengers did not retire to rest till a late hour. We all felt more or less excited at the idea of setting our feet on *terra firma* once more, and that in a very short space of time. All nature seemed at this time gay; the sailors as well as others brightened up with smiling countenances.

February 25th.—I rose at half-past six o'clock, and anxiously waited on the poop till the joyful sound of "Land a-head!" was echoed along the deck, when every one gazed abroad to welcome the first glimpse of that clime whither we were all bound. The coast of New Holland was, without doubt, in sight at eight o'clock A.M.; but as we were still a considerable distance off, we could only distinguish that it really was land, and were unable to form any idea of the kind of coast we had to expect. Our vessel pursued her proper course until eight o'clock P.M., when we encountered a thunderstorm, which lasted about an hour.

February 26th.—The wind continued fair all the latter part of the night. It lulled for a short time this morning, and then continued to blow very hard for the remainder of the day and succeeding night. I may state that we sighted a vessel going before the wind to-day; she was supposed to be bound for New Zealand. We soon lost sight of her, as we were beating against the wind, while it was favourable

for her. All were in high spirits, as we were rapidly nearing Port Jackson.

February 27th.—Sunday morning is generally a very quiet time on board, but the excited state of many had a tendency to render us all very restless to-day. We were pacing the decks nearly the whole day, viewing the bold-looking coast of that land which has of late been the engrossing topic of our conversation. Hot rolls for breakfast, plum-pudding for dinner, plum-cake for tea, and many other nice little indulgences were placed on the table, but none of them had any charms for me. To step on the shore once more, after this long imprisonment, I felt would be a much greater treat than all the luxuries of eating and drinking that the world could produce. I saw a beautiful land bird settle on the ship's rigging to-day; I was once very near it. It proved to be a parroquet—a bird which is very plentiful in the Australian bush. Its rich bright green and dark blue hues excited our admiration. I lay down and endeavoured to lull my excited brain once during the day, but the attempt proved useless, as nothing short of Sydney would now satisfy any of us. We sighted a schooner and a brig at five P.M.; they were supposed to be coasters. We were at this time about thirty miles from the far-famed Botany Bay. Our vessel was gliding along before a fair wind, at a distance of about a dozen miles from the shore.

After beholding our promised land for several days, about ten o'clock P.M. we witnessed another gratifying sight, and that nothing less than the revolving light on the southernmost head of Port Jackson, which sent forth to us, then twenty miles distant, its cheering star-like influence to welcome and guide the weary voyager to its haven of rest. Many stood gazing on this minute twinkling object for hours before our vessel reached the welcome harbour. It was two o'clock on the following morning before I vainly tried to close my eyes in sleep.

February 28th.—About five o'clock this morning our gallant ship was opposite Port Jackson; but as the captain

had never yet been in, he thought it prudent to put out to sea again until daylight should enable him to take the vessel in without incurring any risk. By seven o'clock the ship was gliding between the heads of the Port, when all on board seemed delighted to view these bold, barren rocks, towering to so great a height—a sight truly picturesque to us after having been confined for nearly sixteen weeks to the mighty wilderness of waters. We soon espied the pilot coming down the harbour to meet us, in answer to the signal which had been hoisted. As the boat neared, and its inmates boarded us, most of our eyes were fixed on the features of these welcome visitors. The pilot's crew consisted of three of the aborigines of New Zealand, one of whom, happening to have a tatooed face, caused us to pay them more than usual attention on our way towards the anchorage ground. Our ship now being in charge of the pilot, and these natives having no work to do whilst on board our vessel, we availed ourselves of the opportunity to chat with them in a friendly manner. We soon found that they could speak English very well. They were well-formed men, very intelligent, and remarkably civil to those who conversed with them. Several immense sharks were seen at the entrance of the harbour, one of which was conjectured to be no less than sixteen feet in length.

Whilst pursuing our course, a reporter from a newspaper establishment came on board, who, however, did not forget the rules of etiquette while endeavouring to elicit all the information he possibly could. I gave him an English paper, and he in return gave me permission to call at his office for a copy of the journal with which he was connected, whenever I thought proper. There were lovely pictures of houses and villas, and numerous bays and miniature havens, ever and anon presenting themselves to our view, as our vessel gently glided past the different small islands studding this beautiful harbour. A little before nine o'clock we were nearing the city, and in passing Pinch-gut Island the anchor was loosened, which soon moored the vessel in perfect safety.

Most of the passengers had already prepared themselves for landing ; and on looking over the ship's side we caught sight of a waterman drawing near with his boat, in which eight or ten might at once go ashore, on payment of a fare of two shillings each. On stepping into the boat I could not refrain from gazing up to those wooden walls that had so long sheltered us from the stormy blast. I seemed as though taking leave of an old friend that still claimed my attachment. I felt also truly grateful to that Divine Being whose watchful care had protected and preserved us all alive during a long voyage of no less than fourteen thousand miles across the ocean. Whose heart, at such a moment, could be so cold and apathetic as not to exult in the goodness and love of that great God, who is ever present with his children, on the deep as well as on the land, who numbers the hairs of their heads, and without whose leave not even a sparrow falleth to the ground ?

Our uncommonly civil boatman landed us in a very short space of time after leaving the ship. On first planting our feet on *terra firma*, it seemed to us as if the ground was moving from beneath us, which sensation was not to be wondered at after the four months' motion on the water. Our passage was regarded, by those competent to form an accurate opinion, as an exceedingly rough one. I elicited this information, in the first place, from our worthy captain himself, and soon after landing I read a long paragraph in one of the Sydney papers to the same purport.

After landing with my companions, most of us, children-like, sauntered along the streets, gazing at every one and at every thing before us, much in the same manner as I had done years before on first visiting the mighty metropolis of Great Britain, and just as countrymen are very often to be seen looking into picture shops. The first things that most of us desired to taste were fruit of some kind and fresh vegetables. These are, naturally enough, a never-failing treat to mariners on entering port. We found our wants quickly supplied with the first-named article on reaching the market,

where we all feasted upon a great variety of fruits, most of which we had never tasted before. Thus refreshed and gratified, we eagerly sought out a place where we could dine, and secure the last-named luxuries—fresh vegetables.

I left my companions a short time after dinner, in order to leave a few small parcels which I had brought from friends of my own in the mother country who had relations in Sydney. One of these gentlemen invited me to breakfast with him the next morning, of whose hospitality I gladly availed myself.

The first day and night, after landing, being over, I rose early in the morning and walked to my friend's house at Darlinghurst, about two miles from the city. This was his private dwelling, though his business premises were situate in one of the principal streets of Sydney. After partaking of my friend's hospitality, he very kindly accompanied me for a walk round one of the small bays, which is a very beautiful addition to the main harbour. He then conducted me through the Botanical Gardens and the Government domains. On our route we saw one of the aborigines, an elderly man.

At the inn where I and my companions slept the first night, I afterwards arranged with the host to board and lodge us all for about a fortnight, for the sum of twenty shillings per week each, which proved a reasonable price compared with what it shortly after became, meats of various kinds being at this time only about 3d. per pound on an average. More of this, however, by and bye, after increased experience.

Whilst I was busying myself in disposing of my little cargo to advantage, and attending to various other minor matters, my companions were taking their pleasure. It took me, however, from the time of my landing till the 20th of March, to dispose of my cargo, and get the machinery belonging to the whole party in readiness to proceed on the mission for which we left our native country. In the meantime, I must not omit to state that the musquitoes annoyed

us new "chums" very much, some of our faces being so marked as to attract the notice of those who had become habituated to their torments. Whilst staying in Sydney, it struck me that a great number of persons were very fond of spirits.

Two of my companions, after having had time to reflect about the course to be pursued, expressed a wish not to go into the bush at all. It was mutually arranged, therefore, that two others of our fellow-passengers should join us in their stead. All being at length arranged, we purchased a horse to harness into the cart which we had brought from England with us, and prepared for our departure to the auriferous regions, which were attracting so many thousands of wanderers and adventurers.

CHAPTER IV.

DEPARTURE FROM SYDNEY—JOURNEY TO THE DIGGINGS—
ARRIVAL AT THE ARALUEN DIGGINGS—REMOVAL FROM
THENCE TO THE OVENS—COLONY OF VICTORIA.

EARLY on Monday morning, the 21st of March, 1853, my little band, with horse and loaded cart, were in readiness to proceed on our journey into the interior. Our immediate destination was the Araluen diggings near Braidwood. Every one was well armed for the purpose of defence against attacks of bush-rangers, who had recently robbed several parties. We had not got out of the town, however, before our horse proved a "jibber," and thinking it might be overloaded, we determined to wait till the morrow, and leave some part of our load behind. On the following morning early we made another start, and managed to get on the road very well. We were just about to enter that wild region popularly known as "the bush," of which Captain Cook caught partial glimpses from that part of New Holland whereon he set his foot, and which was not far from the spot whereon the city of Sydney is now built. Little did the great navigator dream that the majestic mountains on which he gazed would ever cast their shadows on plains waving with golden treasure, and that whilst thus beholding a very small portion of this great country, a future day would reveal to the enterprising colonists a region celebrated as the new El Dorado.

To proceed, however, to the particulars of our journey, I

may relate that the day was warm, which we all felt more or less while walking through the dust for twenty miles, before we reached the township of Liverpool. We here drew into the adjacent bush, to pitch our tent for the night, as is customary in Australia. The sun was descending below the horizon ere we had finished our camping work, in which all gladly united, it being our first night's bush experience, and, no doubt, sleeping under a tent was a novelty to every one of our party. The horse being let loose to feed on the grass, and our novel dormitory ready to receive us, I went in company with another to purchase something for supper. We procured some tempting slices from a leg of mutton, which on our return we set to work to cook. Ours was quite a novel plan of cooking, as we then knew little of that business; but as necessity is the mother of invention, we were not long before some sticks were cut to serve for toasting forks. With these simple implements our meal was soon prepared, and in a few minutes all hands were in motion. This being our first out-door bivouac, most of us felt a little delicacy about lying down, and more especially as the night proved frosty. We chatted till almost midnight, standing round a fire to keep ourselves warm, ere we retired to rest. The reader must know that there is plenty of wood to be picked up in almost every part of Australia, except on the plains, thus costing the traveller nothing but his labour in gathering it. We were visited by a large dog during the night. The animal boldly walked into the tent, and putting his cold nose against the hand of one of my companions, instantly woke him. This simple incident at first alarmed some of our number, who immediately cried out in an excited voice, "To arms! to arms! my boys."

At dawn, some of our party renewed the camp fire, and commenced preparations for breakfast; for our combined efforts, in this early stage of our experience, required an unusually long time to produce a few slices of mutton nicely roasted on a wooden fork, and a kettle of aromatic tea, whose clear surface would honestly reveal the well-

burnt faces of two red-nosed, anxious cooks, a sight which caused all of us to laugh heartily. We did not manage to strike our tent so as to resume our journey until nine o'clock, by which hour we had over-night anticipated reaching the township of Camden, another good stage of about twenty miles. However, after striking our tents, we marched on slowly through the dust and heat of the day, and passed a little way beyond the above-mentioned town. The sun by this time being low in the heavens, our little party consented to stop at the first convenient spot where water and grass were comeatable, which we found before the daylight disappeared.

Now, then, was the time to work again, and readily did four of our number turn to, and soon had everything in readiness for another night in the bush. It may be well, however, ere I take the reader further, to mention that we sit on the ground to take our food, and recline on the emerald turf very much as gipsies do in the mother country. Our horse browsed quietly on the grass near our tent, whilst we were all seated around the big fire, enjoying our pannicans of tea; for cups and saucers are a luxury unknown in bush travelling. The pannican is merely a tin vessel, holding about a pint. After partaking of our supper in this humble way, we sat chatting over the comfortable fire. So far as I can recall the topic of our conversation, it chiefly related to the gold fields, and the probabilities of our success. Some enjoyed their pipes of tobacco quite as well as any of the tawny tribe could possibly do in the mother country; but the cup of tea, unhappily, had not charms sufficient to satisfy one of our little band; he, therefore, walked to the township in quest of spirits, and returned to our camp in a state of decided inebriation, which was not a little annoying to his sober-minded comrades, especially at so early a stage of our experience in bush travelling. All, however, retired to rest on amicable terms, and slept tolerably well, considering this to be only our second night in our tent.

March 24th.—All being in readiness this morning we journeyed onward once more, with fine weather to cheer us; but the roads, as we proceeded, proved much more difficult; and as our horse failed to pull so well as usual, we were under the necessity of taking it out, and dragging the cart up the hills ourselves, whenever the horse failed in his attempts. Thus impeded, it took us the whole day to get over a few miles of ground; and on coming up to a hut where the good people seemed to be pleased with our company, we were tempted to rest on that spot all the following day, which happened to be Good Friday. Here we were presented with milk, potatoes, cabbages, quinces, peaches, and other good things. Here we saw a man who never shaves; he was called an "old hand," which the reader will understand the meaning of more fully by and bye. It was here that we saw for the first time some beautiful plumaged birds, and heard the noisy laughing jackass vociferating his jargon for the first time.

March 26th.—All hands were up by daylight; our tent was struck, and all was prepared to resume our journey soon after eight o'clock. We had not proceeded far, however, when the cart vexatiously broke down, and no blacksmith was to be got nearer us than fourteen miles. To make the best of this misfortune, we all set about unloading it; and after patching up the broken part, onward we went once more, till we saw a paddock belonging to a widow woman, where we decided on camping for the night. This good woman informed us where we might get milk for our tea—a piece of intelligence which I quickly availed myself of; but as the dogs would not let me approach near the hut, it was some time before the good man who dwelt there could be made to hear, he being unfortunately very deaf. However, I succeeded at last; and eccentric as he was, there was one trait in his character no one could fail to admire, which was the singular one of refusing to take money for the milk: he expressed a wish that I would give the sum to the poor widow

near our encampment—a request in which I willingly acquiesced.

Whilst endeavouring to continue on our journey, the horse again evinced his jibbing propensities to such an extent that we were brought to a complete stand-still. Finding we were necessitated to stop, I and another walked about two miles with a pail before we could find any water. On the following morning we agreed to purchase another horse, and as there happened to be one for sale within a few miles of us, we soon struck a bargain with the proprietor. This proved to be a horse that had undergone the punishment of having its eyes gouged out, since he could not be managed without, from his vicious habits of flying at and biting any person who ventured near him. After making this purchase, we fitted up some harness for the purpose of trying the two animals together; but this proving a failure, we sold the Sydney horse forthwith to an innkeeper on the road. When we reached the blacksmith's shop before alluded to, we found this adept at iron, blowing away at the charcoal, and tossing off the noblers in a very skilful manner. After waiting a considerable time, we managed at last to get the breakage of the cart patched up, by paying a very exorbitant charge.

The weather proved fine since leaving Sydney until the night of the 28th, and early on the following morning, when we were visited by a heavy tempest. The rain being very drenching came through our tent, which certainly had the effect of cooling us a little for the time. On resuming our journey, however, with our old coachy, I shot many birds of beautiful plumage; and ere night came on we met a dray, with a broken-down mail-coach, and passengers packed on the top of it. I could not help pitying those who were anxiously waiting for the letters thus delayed.

March 30th.—We were last night again visited with rain, but it did not hinder us resuming our journey early this morning, as we wished to reach Paddy's river, which we

heard was about a dozen miles or so before us ; but as the road proved very sandy, we got stuck in it several times, and had it not been for putting our shoulders to the wheels, we could not have gone on ; and after all our perseverance, the daylight had left us long before we reached the desired spot. The night proved so dark that I prevailed on some of my party to go in front as pioneers, whilst I led the horse in the rear. As soon as we reached our destination, it being then very late, the inmates of the huts were in bed. We had nothing left for our supper ; but by the exercise of a little patience and perseverance we roused up one elderly man, who kindly sold us a small loaf of bread, which, together with tea, sufficed for our suppers. We were all very tired, and only too glad to lie down to rest. Our conversation in the morning was chiefly about the native dogs, whose howling on the mountains near us throughout the night prevented our enjoying much slumber ; while, to vex us still more, we had to undertake a long and anxious search before we found our horse. As we had no meat with us, all our party worked away in picking and cooking some birds which I had previously shot. The parrot species we found very excellent eating. After putting our recovered horse to the cart, we journeyed for five miles over a barren and sandy tract of country till we fell in with water, and then we rested for about two hours, feeding the horse and eating the remains of our birds with bread and tea. After this little refreshment, we made close up to the township of Marulan, where we halted for the night. Here we had the utmost difficulty to procure food for ourselves and the poor horse for any amount of money. Our tent was pitched a short way off the township, just on the track leading to Braidwood, south of the main line of road which passes through Goulbourn. In the evening I wanted a shoe put on the horse ; but finding these gentlemen blacksmiths in their cups, I delayed taking the horse till the following morning, when I hoped to find them quite sober.

Two of our party this evening left the rest, and went to a public-house, from which they did not return till a late hour, and then not so sober as those wished who were left in charge with the tent and other property contained therein.

The next morning I led the horse to the township, and got a shoe put on. We then prepared for another start through the bush toward the desired gold field. We reached another small township called Bungolia, where, unfortunately, we could not purchase any food for ourselves or horse; we did the best we could, therefore, with a few birds. We had a little rain in the night. We passed on the next day through a hilly country, thickly studded with trees. Nothing was to be procured to eat on the way, till we came to a hut about a dozen miles from our starting point. We here saw plenty of wild ducks and cockatoos, and in the night the dingoes crept very near our tent. I took my gun, and tried to get near enough to shoot one; but the night being dark, prevented me from seeing them.

April 3rd.—Sunday morning. We made up our minds to rest here all day, as we had the good luck to procure flour, which, with the birds I had shot, served to make us a pie. We resumed our journey next day, for eight miles or so, and after resting awhile, made about nine miles more towards evening. There was scarcely a hut to be seen. We could get nothing to eat except parrots and magpies, which I could shoot in abundance; there was no water to drink except thick muddy stuff, procured from an occasional wheel rut in the bush.

April 5th.—Struck our tent, and getting on a mile, we fortunately procured a little corn for the horse. Whilst here, I shot a brown crane and a black duck. After getting on three miles further, we came to a creek near the Shoalhaven river, where there is a small public-house; and then passing over about eight miles of country, rather more open than we had lately seen, we encamped for the night.

April 6th.—Having struck our tent earlier than usual, we

were enabled to make a start this morning by seven o'clock, and had not journeyed onward more than a few miles before we caught sight of a small house, where we purchased three quarts of mixed bran and barley: for this small feed we paid two shillings and sixpence. These novel charges rather astonished us new chums. After the animal had licked up every particle of his food, away we went again, elated, with the idea of being within a few miles of the famed township of Braidwood, and thinking, then, of soon beholding a gold field for the first time in our lives. After reaching the few houses dignified by the name of a town, we were sorely disappointed at the sorry figure which it cut, as we had been led to anticipate a large and flourishing place, by the representations of the daily journals. After resting the horse, and partaking of refreshment ourselves, we resumed our journey; but not until, as the result of our inquiries, our party decided to proceed to the Araluen Diggings, in order to try our hands with the pick and spade. This part of the Braidwood Diggings we found was about eighteen miles from the township alluded to. There were, besides, the Little River, the Bells Flat, the Bells Creek, and Major's Creek, all included under the general designation of the Braidwood Diggings.

After our little party had got on the road about five miles, we caught sight of a sheep station, and on making inquiries of a person whom we encountered, we ascertained that it belonged to a Mr. Badgery, a wealthy squatter. The person pointed out good grass for our horse, and invited us to camp, offering us, at the same time, milk for tea. We were thus tempted to pitch our tent without delay, to enjoy the delicious beverage which formed so sweet a contrast to the muddy water we had been necessitated to drink for several days previously.

On the succeeding morning all hands were busying themselves at daybreak; some preparing the breakfast, whilst others were striking the tent. Everything being in readiness for marching, soon after eight o'clock we were to

be seen in motion towards the Araluen mountain, which we had to cross before arriving at the diggings. We found the roads very hilly and bad, which made the toil excessively exacting in climbing the aforesaid mountain. Whilst gazing on the glorious panorama presenting itself to our view from this lofty elevation, and the steepness of the mountain side, I was forcibly struck with the difficulty and danger of our descent; and well knowing the lack of boldness and nerve which had characterised some of our party, who had already fainted in the presence of less formidable perils, I suggested that one of the party should stay behind with the cart and its contents, whilst the other four descended the mountain in company with the horse and the tent. This proposal was accordingly adopted. With the tent on the horse's back, and I and my colleagues laden with whatever our strength was equal to, I briskly led the way. I noticed that the sun was getting very low in the heavens, and foresaw that there was no time for procrastination; for what could we do at the bleak and sterile mountain top, where there was neither water, nor grass, nor adequate shelter? On went the poor horse and his attendants. We had several narrow escapes of being pitched headlong before we reached the base. It took us about two hours to descend this precipitous slope; indeed, of all the spots I ever attempted to traverse, this I believe to have been the worst. It wound first to the right hand, and then to the left, taking us a zigzag course; otherwise, indeed, it would have been impossible to proceed at all, especially with a heavy load on our backs, and in darkness long before we reached the bottom. The descent was so steep that it seemed quite a mercy we escaped uninjured. Falls we had almost without number, which will not be very soon forgotten.

All being down in safety with our loads, I gave the poor horse liberty to feed on the grass. Our work, however, was not yet done. We were necessitated to ascend the mountain again, or lay down on the ground and fast another twelve

hours. Leaving one of the party, accordingly, to fix the tent and kindle a fire, the remaining three, jaded and fatigued as we were, ascended the mountain once more. This was not done without many desponding complaints on the part of my comrades; but there was no help for it, the task must be accomplished and the danger braved. But even this was not all; for after reaching the top, and resting our trembling, aching limbs awhile, we loaded ourselves again, and descended a second time, having first prevailed on the one who had not as yet wearied his legs, to continue his watch by the side of the cart all night. Having achieved these pedestrian feats, we shared out our bread and meat, which ration it did not take us long to devour, nor the empty ravenous stomach to stow away. By this time it was early morning; still there were yet some few hours which we might devote to a recruit of our exhausted strength; indeed, I do not know that my own frame was ever more in need of repose.

After rising from our rude couch and kindling a fire, we were obliged to search in all directions for water, and had to go a great distance before any could be found. With this we made a little tea, which was refreshing, with the scanty crusts we had reserved for this occasion. I then consulted with my companions about getting down the cart by means of ropes, letting it down from tree to tree, a little way at a time. They at once approved of the plan, and expressed their willingness to aid in its execution; whilst I, in the meantime, was to go in quest of the horse, which had unfortunately strayed in search of better herbage. The horse I soon found, and the young man who had spent the night on the mountain top was heard descending long before he came in sight, dragging after him a large branch of a tree, loaded with articles taken out of the cart. I then went part of the way up the mountain side, and having met the other three with the cart, I assisted them till we got it down safe and sound.

Now, then, was our time to move on in search of food,

which we delayed not to do. We had not gone far before we came up to a small public-house, called the "Happy Valley" Inn, kept by a Mr. Macdonald, who also sold provisions such as we needed. This being in the immediate vicinity of both the upper and the lower Araluen diggings, and situated between the two, was a favourable spot on which to pitch our tent awhile, since it would afford us an opportunity of inspecting both places, and forming our choice. Our work being done accordingly, we rested ourselves there till the following day.

April 9th.—This was indeed a lovely morning; the mountain scenery was greatly to be admired as beheld from our encampment. I did my best to collect information as to the state of the neighbouring diggings, whilst some of my companions were lounging at the public-house. One of the aborigines walked majestically past us; and on inquiry, we learned that he was one of the chiefs of the Araluen tribe.

April 10th.—Sunday morning turned out to be a very pleasant one. Most of us had but little rest last night through the noise made by the opossums. I rose in the night, and after putting wood on the fire, stood for some time listening to the peculiar sounds emitted by this little nocturnal animal. After partaking of some breakfast, one of my companions joined me in a stroll along this level grassy track of land, dotted over with abundance of trees of various kinds. Amid these primeval forests, we strangers were struck with wonder at the novel character of everything around us.

One of my companions and I were invited to dine with Mr. Macdonald to-day, when there happened to be present a Catholic priest, who performed service in the house whilst waiting for dinner. On returning to our tent in the evening we saw about thirty natives, some of whom were inebriated; but they evinced much politeness. Seeing that we were strangers, they bowed to us, and those who happened to wear hats took them off as we approached them.

April 11th.—Another lovely morning. We were disturbed all night at intervals by the howling of the dingoes. I rose, and, taking my gun in my hand, walked around the tent, and stood about waiting for one to venture near me, but to no purpose. Most of our party were out looking for the horse all the day. I shot six beautiful parrots whilst in search of him; but we all returned towards the evening without finding the poor wanderer.

On the day following, several of our party again went out, in different directions, in search of the horse; but, as before, in vain. Last night the wind blew so hard that we had great trouble to keep our tent from being blown away. A black man came up to us whilst at supper this evening, when we gave him some food, for which he was very grateful. Next morning I rose early, and went in search of wild ducks. I returned in good time, with one teal and two black ducks as the reward of my labour, which made us a sumptuous dinner. No horse found up to this time.

April 14th.—We discovered a white frost on the ground early this morning. I took my gun and shot a bronzed-winged pigeon, besides parrots, magpies, etc., which made us an excellent meal. I had a long chat with a Presbyterian clergyman, who lodged at the adjacent public-house last night. He is about taking a long tour through the wilds of the country. I found his company very pleasant and agreeable. We noticed several tremendous fires last night, which illuminated the mountain sides. I understand, from inquiries since made, that these fires are at times produced by the aborigines, sometimes through carelessness on their part, while at other times they are kindled purely out of revenge on the white man.

April 15th.—A lovely morning. I picked up manna from beneath the branches of the white gum tree. It is very much like that sold by the chemists for children's medicine. After breakfast I shot a bullock for Mr. Macdonald with one of my pistols. One of my companions fell ill with a fever of some kind. Happening to bring medicines with

me, and having a slight knowledge of the administration of simple drugs, I did my best for him, so that, in the course of a few days, he recovered. I now gave up all expectation of finding the horse any more, concluding that either some one must have stolen him, or that the poor animal had strayed away into the mountains, and perished with thirst.

I could now form a pretty good idea of the little good to be done at these diggings, although, as yet, I had only been out prospecting; and also from the experience I had had with the two dram-drinkers, to whom I have already alluded. I accordingly made up my mind to separate from them, and, after selling all superfluous articles, proceed at once on foot to the Ovens diggings, in the province of Victoria. I made my purpose known to all the party, and gave one of the dram-drinkers five pounds to leave me, while the other, his most intimate friend, who owed me upwards of two pounds, I discharged without a character. To the other two younger men I offered the option of accompanying me on foot, since the horse was lost. They accepted the offer; and, after disposing of all that we could dispense with, including the cart, we three started off, to make the nearest way across the bush, to the Ovens diggings, having between three and four hundred miles to perform to reach that destination.

Before I take my leave of Araluen, I feel it a duty to state, for the interest of all who may hereafter be induced to leave England, to try their fortunes at the gold mines, that the two machines—Hunt's patent and another kind—which our party took out with us, proved total failures. Neither of them was of any use whatever, after all the fuss made about them in England. They proved valueless for the purposes for which they were originally intended, or for that of any other, after properly testing them, in concert with old miners. I left them on the ground, with other mining tools, for time, the greatest of all innovators, to dispose of, as I could neither sell them, nor prevail on any one to accept them as a present.

The sun had passed the meridian on the 19th day of April, before we three pedestrians had matured our plans sufficiently to make a start to a greater distance than we had originally anticipated on leaving the capital of New South Wales. We had nothing with us except our blankets and fire-arms; a few tin vessels, in which to boil our water for tea and to drink the same out of; a bag each for tea, sugar, and flour, which I found were indispensable whilst travelling, more especially as the track we were then taking was very thinly populated.

We made about five miles only the first day, having had a lofty mountain to ascend, which gave us no little trouble. The top of this mount brought us very near to the Bells Creek diggings. We found shelter under a gum tree for the first night. The following morning we rose at day-break, and after walking on with some little difficulty, we found out the track which took us to the Major's Creek diggings, which was our proper course. After our arrival there, we took our breakfast in a tent opened to the public for that purpose. Breakfast being over, away we went, fancying ourselves as courageous as any three travellers in the bush of Australia.

When growing weary, we fortunately came up to a settler's home, where we were welcomed in, and partook plentifully of bread and cheese, fruits, etc. Soon after leaving this hospitable family, we reached the bank of a small river, which had no tendency whatever to damp our spirits, as we could not possibly do more than get our feet and legs wet in the act of crossing. It was not long after this that our backs got such a soaking with rain as we had not before experienced since leaving old England.

It was our lot to-day to walk many miles without seeing a hut to cheer us, till towards evening, when we caught sight of a bark gunyah; but on approaching near and calling out, no human being could be induced to speak with us, or even to show a friendly face; albeit, in a twinkling, there stood before us two crusty curs that defied our nearer

approach. Being satisfied, however, that the owners were from home, we resumed our journey. The rain had by this time partially subsided; we walked on, therefore, mile after mile, expecting by the time of the sun's going down, we should, in all probability, draw near a hut which we understood was a short distance beyond the bark gunyah just alluded to, unless we had followed up the wrong track, which was not improbable to us as strangers.

We continued slowly to walk on, very weary, until ten o'clock, and being doubtful of finding any place of shelter, determined on stopping for the night as soon as we could find water. It was not long now before we came up to a small spot of swampy ground, where we were fortunate enough to feel out a little water, it being too dark to see distinctly. The ground and wood being wet, caused us no little trouble to kindle a fire to boil our water and dry our clothes. We took a little refreshment, sharing it out equally, and reserving a crust for the morning. My companions slept tolerably well through the night; but all sleep departed from my eyes.

At four o'clock the next morning, I roused up the two sleepers to procure some water for our humble breakfast; and partaking of the crust reserved for the occasion, we soon took up our beds and walked. The roads being bad, after the rains of yesterday, rendered us mere second-rate travellers, especially as we were tired out with the thirty miles of the previous day. We had not gone on more than three miles when we were cheered by seeing a hut before us, whither we directed our steps, and found a hearty welcome. After being abundantly refreshed by these good-natured and hospitable people, off we went again towards a township called Queanbeyan, which place we made a few minutes before sun-set. Here we purchased bread, and beef-steaks for twopence per pound, without bone. The best sleeping accommodation to be had was a ground floor, which being very hard, induced us to sit up by the fire the greater part of the night.

At four o'clock next morning up we got, fully determined, after indulging ourselves on beef-steaks, to walk onward once more. We found the country much more open and level than any we had before met with in our ramblings. We had not gone over this grassy plain for more than seven miles when we drew up to a shepherd's hut, to inquire a few particulars about the best route for us to take. The hospitable occupier happened to be at home, his flock of sheep at the time browsing around the hut, and he would not hear of our walking further until we allowed him to bake bread wherewith to refresh ourselves. This little experience of travelling in the wilds of Australia gave me a favourable idea of the warm-hearted hospitality of the scattered population of these regions so far beyond the great highways of traffic, where their covetous and rapacious propensities have not been developed.

The mountain scenery in the distance, as far as the eye could reach beyond the plains, was truly grand and picturesque. Very few trees of any kind appear on the plain; but some of the rocks struck me with wonder whilst gazing on them, as they are tilted up edgeways. I felt compelled to admire the works of nature, and whilst thinking of nature's God, to exclaim with the good man of old, "How wonderful are thy works, O Lord; the earth is full of thy glory."

Towards the after-part of the day, as we pursued our way, my companions and I could hardly move one leg before the other. Encouraged and cheered by my example, however, they slowly hobbled along after me, for I walked a-head, if possible to find out food and shelter for the night. I fortunately soon espied a person galloping through the bush, and as soon as I could make him hear, I elicited the desired information. He told me that there were huts not far from us, and that we should soon reach a sheep station. This we found to be correct; for we speedily reached a human habitation, and on seeing the owner of the place and explaining our position, he immediately issued orders which

soon regaled our ears with the music of the frying pan, and the joyous sound of boiling water. We were desired to eat, drink, and be merry.

April 23rd.—We were this morning very much refreshed by the kindness shown to us. The worthy host shot a very large eagle, and showed us a dingo which had been poisoned in the night with strychnine. These were novel sights to us. Then, after comforting the inner man, and thanking him for the hospitable manner in which he received us, we took leave of the good people and departed, in order to make the most of our time. It being Saturday, I endeavoured to reach a public-house, which was said to be within a reasonable day's journey of us; but the weather being warm, and our feet very tender, we did not reach a hut at all, and were compelled to camp in the bush, and make our beds with grass and branches of trees, in the best manner possible.

After kindling a fire I felt very unwell, and almost fainted away several times, which of course caused my companions to feel somewhat alarmed. I told them, however, that I thought a little rest would soon recover my wonted health; but at the same time it is no joke to be far away from all medical and domestic comforts in the time of sickness. I had a very little rest throughout the night. On the following day we walked slowly till we came up to the little public-house, which we had hoped to reach last evening. Here, then, we rested all Sunday, and took our meals with the family, which proved to be very numerous, as the host was an elderly man, with his own offspring and numbers of grandchildren, which looked like so many olive branches round his table. Here we fared better than on any previous day since leaving our native land, on turkey, roast shoulder of mutton, tarts, fruits, etc., and all for the moderate charge of one shilling and sixpence each. Here we were also favoured with a feather bed, being the first we had slept on since leaving Sydney.

The succeeding morning we saw hoar frost on the ground,

but the brightness of the sun quickly dispersed it. The nights were peculiarly cold in comparison with the mildness of the days. We tried our hands at washing our clothes out this morning ; and about noon we were again in motion, proceeding towards the township of Yass, which is situated on the main line of road leading from New South Wales towards the colony of Victoria. After reaching this place at five o'clock, we purchased beef and other things that we stood in need of: the beef we were able to procure at two-pence per pound. We passed onwards the same evening till we came up to good water, and there camped for the night. The rain poured down all the latter part of the night, and the following forenoon till eleven o'clock, by which time we had made ourselves tolerably comfortable by the side of a large fire, regaled with beef, damper, and tea. Nothing worthy of special remark occurred during the next few days. Our experiences were very similar to those which I have already recorded with considerable minuteness.

April 30th.—On this day we reached the township of Gundagai, where we could readily purchase such articles as we stood in need of. This place was originally intended for the site of a town, and a few houses were actually built on the flat piece of ground on either side of the Murrumbidgee river which flows here ; but sad experience taught the speculators that the ground was too low ; for in the month of June, 1852, several of the houses built on the flat were washed away by a great flood, such as had never before been known within the memory either of settlers or natives. It occasioned the loss of several lives. The house at which I made some little purchases had been partly washed away on the occasion, the proprietor being from home at the time. His poor wife and children climbed up to the top of the house outside of its roof, thinking thereby to escape drowning ; but it was ordered otherwise, for the entire roof was swept away, by which calamity the fond mother with her darling babes were precipitated into the drifting current and consigned to a watery grave. The surviving husband

related to me the mournful tale. However, I found he had since taken a second wife to repair the great breach in his family which this fearful flood had caused.

Ere we crossed the Murrumbidgee on a punt, we were much amused at the attempt of several men to drive a thousand bullocks into the water, in order to make them cross over. They were galloping their horses, and cracking their long stock whips, shouting out lustily all the time. These men had to undergo desperate exertions before all these animals took to the water; and one of the number got drowned. Two days after crossing the river, we found ourselves near a creek, and it being wet we camped there all day in company with a dray-man. In the course of conversation, he admitted having spent fifteen hundred pounds in Sydney at one time before he was cured of his prodigality. Here we saw a Chinaman in trouble. He had lost two hundred sheep. He was a great smoker, and offered me some tobacco. He informed me that his master gave him fifteen shillings per week and his rations. Here we were compelled by the wet weather to stay all night. Other men with bullock trains came up to camp near us; they were a rough and rude set of fellows.

May 3rd.—We had very little rest on our hard beds last night. The morning, however, was fine, and off we started once more for the diggings. Meeting a dray overturned in a creek, we assisted to get things into order again. All this fortunately ended well, without hurting the horses, or doing any material damage to the dray or the goods which it contained.

I saw a grave near the road-side to-day; and from inquiries made, I ascertained that it contained the body of a bullock-driver, who had met with sudden death by falling from the dray whilst in a state of intoxication, the wheels running over and crushing his head. Some of the poor bullocks were starved to death in their yokes, whilst the remainder got loose, and were feeding on the grass when found. The following day, whilst trudging on our way, we

saw a dray with one wheel broken, whilst in the act of crossing a stony creek: as there were two men to accompany it, one was left behind with the property, whilst the other went in quest of another dray to take the load upon.

May 5th.—I was seized with the cramp in my legs last night, so that there was but little rest for me. We journeyed on as usual, and encamped about five o'clock P.M., and the following morning we were to be seen climbing one side of the famous Tarcutta mountains, which we found to be no mean task to perform. The scenery from the top is most picturesque; three sugar-loaf shaped mountains were before us, thickly studded with iron-bark trees. As we had not previously seen this kind of tree, we could not at first make them out, as the bark appeared unusually dark, almost approaching to blackness. Just beyond these mountains we caught sight of a little store, where we replenished our failing provisions. By five o'clock we had done about a dozen miles or so; and being tired, we rested ourselves on the ground for the night, after making up a roaring fire, which we generally managed to do; indeed one did not always suffice. As we could at most times pick up a cart-load of wood around our camp, we generally kindled two good fires, and when the weather was wet, lay down between them. These, handled prudently, were good friends to us, and proved far better than being between the two fires of an enemy.

On the morrow, after rising from beneath a huge gum tree, we baked a damper in the hot embers, which the night fire had left. We resumed our course as soon as the baking operations were over. Falling in with a shepherd, he very much pressed me to sell him my pistols, which, of course, I as strenuously declined doing, thinking that there might yet be a time when such trusty friends would serve me well, as we had oftentimes heard of the daring exploits of bush-rangers since our sojourning in the bush.

Not long after reaching the camping ground fixed on for

the night, the rain began to descend on our heads, to our great discomfort, not having anything better than the trees for shelter. We were necessitated to light two fires in order to counteract the wetness of the night. Here we stood till a late hour, drying branches of trees to rest our weary bones upon. It ceased raining a little before midnight, when we tried to go to sleep; but, slumber fled from my eyes, although my companions slept tolerably well till daylight. I rose and stood by the fire-side till the dawn of another day, and then roused up the other two. I suppose we travelled nearly twenty miles during this day. We met with many diggers rambling from one gold-field to another, and saw many dead horses and bullocks by the road-side, the unmistakeable evidences of our proximity to the gold-fields. Very picturesque mountain scenery was visible in the distance, covered apparently with grass.

The succeeding night, one of my companions rose, and whiled away the time by smoking his pipe. He was the only smoker in our party. The day after, we partook of a crust of dry bread, with a little tea, which was all we possessed, and journeyed on in anticipation of soon falling in with a public-house, where we could renew our stores. Our hopes were at length indulged. On entering the house we purchased beef and flour: for the last-named article the landlady (from the Emerald Isle) tried hard to screw out eighteen-pence per pound, but on expostulating with her she condescended to take the low sum of a shilling. For the beef we were only charged three-pence per pound; but after cooking it, we tried in vain to masticate it. It proved more than a match for us.

Whilst camping to refresh ourselves, we had the pleasure of looking upon five thousand sheep, which were quietly feeding near us; and as this was the largest flock any of us had before seen, we, as Captain Cuttle said, "made a note on't." We accomplished about seven miles more this day, and coming up to a creek containing good water, we there lay down on the ground for the night. The next morning

I had the mortification to find the fire getting the mastery over my blanket and rug, which had so often befriended me at night. I soon, however, rescued these faithful friends from the consuming element. The mountains we were now passing over and between were highly picturesque.

May 11th.—We met the Sydney gold escort to-day returning from the diggings; and saw a poor man on the road, ill, and returning slowly to the township of Albury, which was within a few miles of us. His heartless companions had left him, not caring whether he lived or died on the spot. I gave him some medicine suitable for the dysentery, with which he was then suffering; and had the pleasure of seeing the poor fellow mounted on a dray before we left him. We reached the aforesaid township by two o'clock P.M., and there purchased a four-pound loaf of bread for the modest sum of five shillings. Albury is situate on the banks of the Murray—the New South Wales side. This river forms the boundary of the two colonies of Victoria and New South Wales. There is beautiful level grassy land on the banks of this large stream. I believe there are lobsters and very fine cod fish caught here. We passed over it on a punt provided for the accommodation of travellers.

After crossing this river, we made about two miles more, and then encamped for the night very near a native grave. I particularly noticed the care which the relatives had taken to fence it all around with sticks. The night proved a very restless one to me, as during the greater part of it the natives were to be heard making a great noise. I conjectured they had been in the township to get rum, which they are doatingly fond of. We resumed our journey early, passing a lagoon about four miles from Albury. We were now in the colony of Victoria. Here we saw many drays; the men having selected this for their camping-ground the night previous. There were also present upwards of a dozen natives, men and women, who were freely chatting with the draymen. On sighting us, they

very soon approached, begging for tobacco, which the females as well as the males are very fond of smoking.

We passed over pleasant mountainous regions ere we rested our weary bones on the grass that night. The next day we caught sight of the Yackandandy diggings, where we purchased flour at eighteen-pence per pound. Many diggers were travelling about. We crossed the mountains called the Alps, and encamped near Reed's Creek diggings at night. On the following day we made within half a mile of Spring Creek, where we had a mind to try for gold. As we "new chums" were now within so short a distance of the diggings, where we intended to commence our mining operations, I beg, in the following chapter, to call the reader's attention to my experience in this, to me, new department of labour, in which it is the lot of most persons to find more blanks than prizes.

CHAPTER V.

PREPARING A TEMPORARY HABITATION—TAKING OUT OUR
LICENCES—SINKING THE FIRST SHAFT—PARTING WITH
ONE COMPANION—EXPERIENCE WITH A “LONG TOM”
—PARTING WITH MY REMAINING COMPANION—FITTING
UP AND WORKING A SLUICE.

SATURDAY, the fourteenth day of May, the month which is of all others so delightfully pleasant in old England, was here, owing to the reversal of the seasons, quite the opposite, it being much colder and more disagreeable than any day since leaving Sydney for the diggings. The rain, sleet, and snow continued to fall during the whole day. I had scarcely a dry thread to my apparel, from the time I rose from my grassy bed in the morning until the daylight disappeared.

Accompanied by one of my companions, I was walking about the diggings all the latter part of the day, purchasing certain indispensable articles, including a calico tent, which cost us six pounds. We lost no time in putting it up, in a temporary way, so as to serve us till the following Monday, and then pitched loads of fuel on the fire wherewith to dry and warm our clothes. The ground being very wet, and my body cold, this day's work brought on an attack of dysentery. We all passed a sleepless night, and indeed stood round the fire during a great part of it. A tipsy man came up to us in the night, whom at first we

found rather troublesome, until we put him in the right track for his tent.

May 15th.—This was Sunday. Before we took breakfast I procured a quarter of mutton, for which I paid four shillings and sixpence. The day was much finer than the previous one had been. I saw many diggers out shooting birds, while others were felling trees. We found some excellent water here, so that we had an opportunity of rinsing out our dirty clothes. At seven o'clock in the evening I laid down in the tent on some branches of trees, and rested till the following morning, when I felt somewhat better. One of my companions behaved in a very perverse and obstinate manner, and the other was very down-hearted, although I did my utmost to cheer him. I so far succeeded as to induce him to assist in cutting poles for our tent, which we pitched on the diggings towards Monday evening.

May 17th.—There was a very white frost this morning, but it heralded a fine day. We put up a bark chimney to-day at one end of the tent; and after we had dug a ditch all round the tent, for the purpose of rendering it dry at the bottom, we made the chimney more safe by casing it with stone and clay. In preparation for digging, I went to the Commissioners and procured our licences, which at this time were thirty shillings each per month. His camp was guarded with both foot and mounted police, with sentinels always posted in various positions round about it. I took this opportunity of posting some letters, the office being a weather boarded building near the government encampment.

We did not attempt to begin our digging operations until the 24th of the month, as it took us the whole of the intermediate time to get our temporary home as comfortable as the peculiarities of our situation allowed of. In the meantime I encountered a digger, whom I at once recognised, although I had not seen him for twenty years previously to that time. I felt very elated on meeting with him, as I was well acquainted with his friends in my native place. His

brother formerly worked for my father ; and knowing all the family to be industrious and well conducted, I felt much pleased in making his acquaintance in this strange land. It so happened that his tent was near mine, and I thus had oftentimes the pleasure of his company whilst at these diggings.

The first time we tried our hands with the pick and spade was to sink a shaft to search for gold, in which attempt we were very sanguine of success. While working at the one alluded to, we found that to begin a second would enable us all to work simultaneously as hard as our strength allowed of. By this arrangement one could rest his limbs for a few minutes, and each could have a spell of labour in his turn. There were hundreds of shafts near us, already sunk ; some were abandoned, whilst others proved remunerative. There were also hundreds of gold-seekers around us sinking shafts, in a similar way to ourselves. Most of these shafts were nearly fifty feet in depth, which to us " new chums " looked rather terrible to descend.

Finding that no gold was found at the bottom of the shafts sunk contiguous to ours, we thought it prudent, before going very low with this second one, to get to the bottom of one first, and on that proving a blank, to abandon the other altogether and try some new ground. We accordingly worked both early and late at our task, carrying our crust with us for dinner to save time. We had not got to the bottom, however, before the water came in, which compelled the one down the hole to send up a few buckets of water occasionally. This was done in the same manner as that by which the dirt was sent up—namely, by winding up the bucket with a windlass attached to a rope, in the same way as the country people in England draw up the water from their wells. Such work as this was quite a novelty to us, and much more laborious than any thing we had before been subject to, independent of our experience in bush travelling. We found that handling the tools produced formidable blisters on our hands, which

were a source of great discomfort in carrying on our labours.

The spot at the bottom of these shafts, where we had reason to expect the gold, either in the shape of dust or nuggets, was indicated by layers of large pebbles and gravel, similar to what we find in the present day covering the bed of streams and shallow water-courses. It is here that, in these *dry diggings*, as they are termed by way of distinction to some others, the gold is found deposited in greater or less quantities. Thousands of years ago these layers of pebbles formed the bed of a running stream or river, into which the auriferous particles were washed from the adjacent rocks, and where they were left on the subsidence of the waters.

On reaching and exposing the bed of this ancient water-course, we invariably tried a small portion of the gravelly deposit by washing it carefully with water, in a prospecting pan; and should there be indications of the presence of the precious metal after the first trial, we were very careful in collecting the remainder; and as we dug deeper, we continued to put more of this alluvial deposit to the test in a similar way, until we were satisfied that it would or would not pay us for working it any longer. I found, in some instances, that the precious metal had subsided beneath the first layer of deposit, and rested sometimes on rotten granite, and at others, formations mixed with blue clay. In such cases it was found very difficult to separate the gold from such tenacious matter. When our experience had taken us thus far, if the hole did not prove remunerative, it was invariably the rule to commence what the miners call "driving," namely, to excavate in a horizontal direction, on a level with the deposit alluded to. Sometimes I have driven a hole, or assisted in doing so, to the extent of six feet or more, and afterwards abandoned it, literally without earning our salt, since we had to pay for that simple article no less than eighteen-pence per pound.

It was highly dangerous in wet weather to trust one's

body in these subterraneous passages beneath such a superincumbent weight of soil, as they are sometimes driven from one person's claim to that of another, by which great peril is incurred, the ground often sinking in and burying tools or any miner who may happen to be toiling in the hole. Many such misfortunes occurred from time to time at the Ovens, and never did I work under such circumstances without feeling a sense of insecurity. To render the excavation as safe as possible, we sometimes propped up such underground works; and oftentimes there was only room enough to lie on our backs or sides to use the pick, spade, and bucket.

When sinking shafts in some localities, after testing them well by driving, we often used a knife to scrape away the loose soil found in the interstices of the rocks, where small nuggets have frequently been discovered. This is termed *crevising*; and many miners carry a long knife in a leather case for that purpose, which to the "new chum" is a source of constant conjectures. At first sight he is disposed to view these formidable things as instruments either of offence or defence, or both; but a little experience with the gold-fields of Australia will dissipate this delusion, and he will find that there are thousands of well-disposed and honourable men at the diggings as well as amongst other mixed communities.

The preserved alluvial drift taken out of the shaft, and supposed to contain the auriferous deposit, had to be carried to some stream or pool for the convenience of separating the precious metal from the earth. This is sometimes done by washing it in cradles, the nature of which are now so well known as to need no description; at other times the gold is washed out with "long toms," which latter process is far more expeditious than the former, and which will be alluded to from time to time in the subsequent pages.

May 31st.—This day was signalized in my digging experience by one of our companions taking leave of us.

Being the youngest of our party, who left home with me, I felt considerable leniency towards him. I had oftentimes indulged him by consenting to his leaving off work earlier than the rest, and some days allowed him to stay in the tent, merely to prepare our food and do little light jobs not so fatiguing as mining operations. But these indulgences did not satisfy him. I had noticed his discontent for several days, and this morning told him plainly to do as he pleased, either to work or play, whichever suited his taste. Like thousands more, he had expected to pick up gold on the surface of the ground without any exertion whatever. He went and engaged himself to a butcher, to drive about sheep for him, for which I understood he was to receive twenty shillings per week, with board and lodgings. On our returning to the tent towards evening, the information which we had received was confirmed by the youth himself; and as he was then going to his new quarters, I accompanied him and saw his employer, and satisfied myself as to the correctness of the story. I afterwards learnt that he soon became weary of his new employment.

My companion and myself were now the only two left together of the original party which left Sydney. One of the two who had been dismissed at Araluen returned to England in the vessel that had brought him out. Thus diminished, we continued to dig day after day, but could produce only a comparatively small quantity of gold. We had not much time for rest, as we had the stores and the butcher to visit some evenings, and at other times to bake a damper, which occasionally kept us up till midnight.

I may here remark that, contrary to what might be expected, there were many articles to be procured at the stores which might be regarded as luxuries on the diggings, namely, potatoes, onions, eggs, tea, coffee, etc., etc., but they were sold at extravagant prices. The first-named article fetched two shillings per pound, the next two-and-sixpence, and the third were one shilling each. Butcher's meat was

generally from sixpence to eightpence per pound, flour I usually paid eighteen-pence per pound for, and butter five shillings. At night we had to carry wood a long distance on our backs whenever we needed it; but sometimes we felled a tree, and after cutting it and sawing it into convenient lengths, the timber would, perhaps, last us a week or more. This was no easy task to perform, however; for as all the trees were burnt up near the tents, we had often to go some considerable distance in quest of such fuel. We found the nights generally cold, and our beds, composed of sheets of bark, proved too hard for our weary bones, and caused us to sleep but little at times. We heard many fire-arms discharged every night soon after dark, which was probably often done in order to let the neighbours know that they possessed the power to destroy, if occasion required. I always placed my loaded pistols under my head at night, so as to be in readiness in case of any alarm. Our tent proved tolerably water-tight. I have sometimes felt a few drops of rain come through on my face at night; but the greatest nuisance was the smoke which, when the wind was blowing hard from a certain direction, would draw in and almost suffocate us.

One night, owing to the carelessness of my companion, our tent was threatened with destruction by fire. It was a custom with him to heap up quite a pile of wood on the fire before he lay down to rest. I had oftentimes remonstrated with him on the subject, being afraid of setting fire to the bark on the top of the chimney, and of igniting one end of the tent at the same time—a casualty which really did occur. We had both laid down, when, about midnight, I heard some person outside call out, “fire.” Up we both sprung; my companion threw water on the chimney, which was blazing away, whilst I attempted to smother the fire then consuming one end of the tent. The accident happily ended well. It seemed a providential escape for us.

June 5th, Sunday.—This sacred day of rest was at all times welcomed by us, as we not only ceased from toil, but

anticipated the pleasure of receiving letters from our dear friends in England. In this expectation I was not mistaken on this occasion. I received two letters from one dearest in all the world to me. Some persons would have supposed that it would cheer me to hear that all were well when those letters were penned; but no! the intelligence had the contrary effect, strange as it may seem to those who never knew what it was to be so far from home and kindred. Such was, in reality, the way this affected me. My companion too, about this time, was getting very down-hearted; but I did my best to cheer him up, and administered to his wants by supplying him with cash whenever he was in need of it, to purchase things which he could not well do without.

Letters are always delivered to the miners on Sundays, as soon as the mail arrives from Sydney and Melbourne. After the letters are sorted out, they are all arranged alphabetically. The postmaster then opens a window, and beginning with the first letter of the alphabet, calls out loud enough for the assembled crowd to hear him; and on any person answering to the name corresponding with the address of the letter, it is at once handed to him. After the letters have been all delivered, I have often stood listening to some preacher of the gospel who took this opportunity to explain and enforce some portion of holy writ, and who was generally listened to very attentively until his sermon was ended. I have seen one of these clerical gentlemen washing for gold during the week time. There were many other professional men also who worked like labourers at these diggings.

On the following Monday night we were very much alarmed. On returning to the tent in the evening, we heard, soon after dark, a fearful noise issuing from a tent close to ours. I afterwards heard the police come up and interfere. I understood, from information gained the next morning, that the companions of one man had beaten him about dreadfully with a spade, and to finish him quite off they

actually tossed him on the fire, but had not killed him, when the constables arrived and rescued him from so dreadful a fate.

July 1st.—My companion and myself were indefatigable during the whole of the month of June in trying for the precious metal. At one time we were down fifty feet under ground, and at other times in holes of shallower depth, up to our knees in water and mud from morn till night. Often we had drawn up hundreds of buckets of water without reducing the quantity in any appreciable degree, in consequence of a spring letting in the water as fast as we drew it out; and all this labour was without any remuneration. This being the first of the month, it was the proper time to renew our licences. I accordingly walked to the government camp for that purpose, and took the opportunity of speaking to the Commissioner about being allowed to commence sluice-washing in the creek; but as he could not give a decided answer to my application until he heard from the Lieutenant-Governor, he requested me to call again at a future period. I found him very pleasant and communicative.

My companion now being extremely disheartened by our non-success, I resolved to try the experiment of "long-tomming;" and accordingly, without delay, I procured one of the long troughs known in digging parlance as a "tom." This article is made by nailing three boards together, about twelve feet in length and a similar number of inches in width, with a sheet of iron, pierced full of holes, fastened on one end at the bottom. This simple machine could only be worked by placing it in a running stream in a sloping direction, so that the water could flow in at the highest end and continue to run gently all the time we wished to be at work. In working it, one person throws in the dirt, stones, etc., from the loose earth which has already been passed through the cradles at an earlier stage of the diggings—at a time when the miners would not work unless the ground was rich in auriferous deposit, as a little gold

would not then satisfy them. At the lower end, underneath the "long tom," is placed a square shallow box, to catch all the heavy substances which are not dissolved by the washing process. Most of the earth then runs off with the current of water, whilst the heavy stones and precious metal fall into this little box, and at the end of each day is taken out and properly cleansed.

We at once went hard to work with our "long tom," and day after day we were up in the morning before daylight, and worked up to our knees in mud and water, until we retired to our tent at night. We generally took a crust with us for dinner, rather than lose the time in walking to our tent. I was generally up the latest at night, attending to our domestic affairs, and first in the morning, as I could not prevail on my companion to exert himself whilst in the tent; and, what was still worse, he proved to be very bad-tempered, and prone to make use of vulgar language. There was a very noisy party in a tent adjacent to ours, where they were generally gambling and card-playing the greater part of the night.

July 8th.—Early this morning, before daylight, a tipsy man, on seeing a light in my tent, made towards it, calling out to know what part of the diggings he was on. I immediately went out, thinking to put him in the right route for his tent. He told me that he had lost his way, and in consequence had been out all night. He was very cold, and requested leave to warm himself, to which I consented, keeping a sharp look-out, however, upon him at the same time. He was too drunk to be able to walk, and he offered to give me five pounds to see him safe home—an offer which I declined.

In the evening I went to a store to purchase a pair of hose for my companion, for which I paid six shillings. I acted as his banker, and he always preferred my making purchases for him. In my evening visits I have several times been challenged by the sentinels when walking near the government camp, but never experienced any difficulty

in being allowed to pass. I seldom spared time to go to a store or to the butcher's until after dark, when I was thoroughly tired out; nor was it to be wondered at, after having carried about five hundred buckets of earth to the "long tom," from heaps at a considerable distance, and in most cases I had to use the pick before I could shovel it into the bucket.

July 10th, Sunday.—I rose at daylight this morning, without much rest for my aching bones. I prepared our breakfast in the best style I possible could, with the means I had at hand. My companion accompanied me for a walk as far as a water-fall in the creek. This is a perpetual stream of water dashing over huge perpendicular rocks to a great depth below. I placed myself on the highest of these rocks, where I could see it in all its grandeur. Whilst standing on this granitic rock, too, I could see the primeval forest in the distance in all its romantic beauty. At the usual hour in the afternoon I went to the post-office, but not receiving a letter from England as anticipated, I felt rather depressed in spirits.

July 13th.—I waited on the Commissioner again to-day, and he gave me full permission to go to work with a sluice whenever I thought proper. I had, to-day, the ill luck to slip into a hole up to my neck in water. Being mid-winter, I found it very cold indeed. It happened to be in the after-part of the day, so that I gave up work, retired to my tent as quickly as possible, and making a fire, dried myself as rapidly as I could. I caught a slight cold, which is not general here, for the climate greatly counteracts such ill effects.

This evening my companion had a most unpleasant quarrel with an "old hand." I took no part in the affair. Most of these old hands are emancipated convicts. The person alluded to actually threatened to knock my young friend's brains out if he hinted again that he was an "old lag," which I understood he had previously insinuated, though not in my hearing. There is nothing, I believe,

offends them more than such allusions, and I verily believe that if they had been repeated, the threat would have been executed. I felt very nervous about the affair; but, at the same time, was fully prepared with my pistols to act on the defensive, had my companion been assailed by such a wretch. Happily, however, I had no occasion to proceed to such extremities.

July 24th.—This being Sunday, I did not rise so early as usual. There were oftentimes sleepless nights for me, in consequence of the croaking of the frogs in the creek very near to my tent, in addition to the discomforts of the bed upon which I am necessitated to rest. The Sabbath day was at all times welcome to me; but missing the society of friends, and the public assemblages of public worship, my mind reverted to the happy days gone by; and did I not anticipate a happy meeting once more where similar privileges would be enjoyed, I should have been of all men the most miserable. I went to the post-office at the proper time in the afternoon, but only to learn, to my regret, that in consequence of the wet weather, four mails were then overdue, and that accordingly there were no letters for me.

August 4th.—I rose soon after three o'clock this morning, being unable to sleep, in consequence of a great noise made in a tent near mine. I kindled a fire very quickly, and, after preparing breakfast, called up my companion. As soon as we had taken our crust of bread and tea, we went forth to our hard day's toil. On my way back to the tent in the evening, I called at the post-office, and received a letter and two newspapers from the post-mistress, who was a pleasant person. This arrival was a source of great delight to me. During the day I saw a clergyman rocking a cradle; I understood that he belonged to the Scotch Church.

The following morning being wet, we did not go to work as usual. I busied myself in washing, mending, writing, etc., till two o'clock P.M., when the sky cleared up, and promised a fine afternoon. So we took a long walk for

the purpose of prospecting in a variety of places, but returned without meeting with any success.

On the ninth of the month, in the evening, when we were in the act of lying down to rest, we heard a great noise issuing from a log hut not far off. A woman was heard calling out "murder!" and not long afterwards the police were to be seen with her husband, marching him off to the lock-up at the government camp.

August 15th.—My companion having made himself very disagreeable for several weeks past, I thought a dissolution of partnership would be advisable. Accordingly, I mentioned to him that I would like him to settle with me, in order that I might leave him, and take possession of a bark-hut which I had about this time purchased, situated near the spot where I had determined upon working a sluice. I, however, offered him the use of my tent for a few days, until such time as he could get comfortable quarters elsewhere. This young man owed me between fourteen and fifteen pounds for moneys advanced him, from time to time, to purchase clothing and provisions. As soon, however, as I intimated my wishes to him, I clearly saw that he had no intention of acting honourably towards me. He at once rendered himself very disagreeable, and advanced several lame excuses for not acquiescing in my arrangement. I said but little to him at the time, being unwilling to come to harsh words. I therefore retired to rest, purposing on the morrow to move my things away from the tent altogether, and let him have the use of it for a few days. On the following day, however, he still persisted in not paying me that which was justly due, and even insinuated that, being a minor in age, I could not enforce my claims. His dishonest intention becoming apparent, I immediately left him. I am induced to mention these facts for the purpose of putting others, similarly situated, on their guard.

Not many days afterwards this ungrateful young man, having joined himself to two others, had the audacity to

take away my tent from these diggings entirely, to others, a great distance off. He had actually joined himself to the very man who, only a short time before, had threatened to dash his brains out. The other was a companion of this one, and, from what I could learn, they were both emancipated convicts. I saw the young man when in the act of starting from Spring Creek; he had a lie ready for me, stating that he had left the tent in its original place. Proceeding to the spot, I soon ascertained that these two disreputable companions of his had taken the tent away in a cart, and gone off in quite a different direction. It was thus I found out what an unthankful office it was to feed and clothe a person who had not a spark of gratitude in his disposition; and although the amount lost was trifling, yet the lesson taught by the incident was not to be forgotten. I had many times nursed this young man, both by night and by day, when ill with dysentery.

I had now taken leave of all my companions, and right glad was I to feel again at liberty. I had fully decided upon employing men to work a sluice. I therefore consulted some Americans (who had previously acquired experience in sluicing in California) upon the practicability of carrying out my designs. We went over the ground together, and unanimously came to the conclusion that it was possible to work it, and decided on commencing preparations on the following morning. The wages given at this time were twenty shillings per diem for each man. I engaged four in the first instance, and eventually five, working with them from morning till night myself. These Americans called each other "boys," which, as they informed me, is customary in their country, whilst they continue single; but as soon as they get married, they are at once distinguished as men. So, as a matter of course, knowing me to have entered the bands of matrimony, I at once received the *soubriquet* of an "old man."

The day after the one spoken of, we all went to work in good earnest, cutting a "race," varying from one to three

feet in depth and about two hundred yards in length, in order to bring the water round the side of the mountain from the upper part of the creek, to the place opposite where I intended to work the ground. The water was much higher at the lower part of the "race" than it was in the main creek, which ran parallel with the "race" thus artificially formed. This was done in order that the stream might flow at first into a hose, which I provided for the purpose, nearly a hundred feet in length, and afterwards into the upper part of the sluice, which is composed of six troughs, each one measuring twelve feet in length. These sluice troughs are constructed with three one-inch sawn boards nailed nicely together, the bottom one being cut broader at one end than the other in each box, so as to admit one fitting closely into another, thus rendering it equal to one long trough of nearly seventy-two feet in length. These troughs were supported in a sloping direction by driving piles into the ground, so that the water, when let loose upon it, could run through quickly. The hose was supported on the bark of a tree resting on piles driven into the ground, similar to those upon which the sluice rested. We had to work several days in cutting the "race" alluded to, and also in making a supplementary one to carry off the water after it had performed its office in running through the sluice.

August 20th.—I rose early enough this morning to see a white frost; the latter part of the night proved unusually cold. I had now sufficiently matured my sluicing machine to begin working it in the latter part of the day; but on learning that there was to be a great meeting held on the diggings, I deemed it prudent to suspend all labour by noon, as the miners were invited to attend by placards posted about in various places. About one o'clock I saw many people flocking to the appointed place of meeting, and not long after a procession passed near my hut, with four flags, bearing the following inscriptions—"Representation for the Miners"—"Unlock the Lands"—"Taxation of

the Miners a Robbery"—"Miners' Rights." I followed the throng, to see and hear what I could at this great assemblage of miners. I conjectured that there were not fewer than three thousand people present. I heard several speeches tending to excite the ill-disposed. The police, I understood, were all in readiness in case of any disturbance; but everything ended peaceably, and productive of neither good nor harm. It caused a little money to be spent, and afforded a holiday to most of the miners on the various diggings known by the general term of "the Ovens."

Whilst sitting in my humble hut this evening, I felt more lonely than usual after the bustle and excitement of the day; and whilst musing in my solitude, many thoughts occurred to my mind, and a retrospect of my boyhood's days brought up the remembrance of joyous times which had long since passed almost into oblivion, and which might never again have revived, were it not for occasions similar to this, when the dull monotony of my situation, without a soul to cheer me, or one in whom I could in reality confide, threw my memory back upon the past. Thus musing, I traced over repeatedly the twelve months of the year, each one in succession; and probably my mind wandered still more, even going over every day of the year, till I thought about the whole of the three hundred and sixty-five days of which it is composed. These reflections shaped themselves into some irregular verses, to which, with all their known imperfections, I am constrained to give a place here, just as they struck me, whilst seated by the lonely fire-side of my humble bark-hut in the Australian wilderness.

This is the merry time of year,
When boys and girls from school appear;
January make haste to see;
All drest in snow-clad garments be.
Seasons like this will yield good cheer;
We wish all happy this new year.

Now in this month, if we all wait,
We shall find its days are twenty-eight,
Except in leap-year; then's the time
When its days number twenty-nine.
A few more words ere I have done;
Valentine comes to cause some fun.

Now March comes in with piercing wind;
The dust blows up enough to blind.
So cold 's this month that all declare
Our coursing dogs shall catch the hare;
Then off we start a treat to get,
But ere cover's reached, we all are wet.

A safe retreat we then did make;
The grey-hounds, too, fall in our wake;
Poor puss is dead, we take her home,
And joyous do we pick a bone.
All gay becomes Creation's dress,
For April's showers return to bless.

Then haste, my boys, to see the dove;
The birds are warbling songs of love;
This is the time their nests they build,
And found are they in ev'ry field:
All nature 's bright, the meadows gay,
And April's showers prepare for May.

The spring is come, with children gay;
The grass will soon be fit for hay;
The flowers are budding, rich with bloom,
Emerging bright from winter's tomb.
But flowers all fade and soon look plain,
Thus teaching man that all is vain.

Now May is gone, in joyous June
My wife and I will play a tune.
Parents think those the sweetest hours,
Which they enjoy in cottage bowers,
While their sweet children round them play,
The fairies of a summer's day.

The summer 's come ; then let me pass ;
Now ev'ry lad will take his lass.
In this month, July, few are mute,
The boys at home they play the flute,
And merry maids do as in France,
When lads strike up the merry dance.

The August sun now ripens the corn,
Ready for garnering in the barn ;
The men and maids, with merry lay,
Go to their work for little pay ;
Poor men and boys, too, work in pain,
To reap and house the golden grain.

September comes ; they toil away
In labours which soon end in play ;
The gladness of the harvest cheer
In cider or in strongest beer ;
While peace and plenty there abound,
The merry cup they pass around.

The master now, with heart and hand,
Drinks health to all that happy band ;
The mistress, too, delights the lass
By handing her a bumper glass.
All shout and sing, " God save the Queen,"
More joyful than they e'er had been.

September's past ; some birds are dead,
And many warblers, too, have fled.
October comes, with pheasants bright,
Which are shot down, both left and right,
To grace the table of some lord
Who can such luxuries afford.

All kinds of fruit on board are spread,
All sorts of wine affect the head ;
In jest and laughter all agree,
Sitting and singing, full of glee.
But how oft the dawning morrow
Sees aching head and heart of sorrow !

November now arrives at last,
We soon shall feel its chilly blast ;
Boys grow merry and get up fracas,
As they let off squibs and crackers :
Ever since Guy Fawkes' invention,
This was caused by man's dissension.

December's here—the weather's cold ;
'Tis felt by all, both young and old ;
The wind blows keen, there's frost and snow,
And how shall I now make a show ?
At Christmas time we'll have some fun,
As soon as the roast beef is done.

I have endeavoured to describe the manner in which sluices are prepared for the purpose of washing the auriferous earth in large quantities. I will now endeavour to depict the method of its working. All hands being ready soon after daylight, on the second morning after the day on which the meeting took place, I drew on my long boots, which reached half-way up my thighs, knowing that to expect any other than wet work in mud would be madness on my part. I took in hand my long shovel, having a handle about five feet in length, or, including the blade, six feet. This kind of shovel is very handy for throwing the earth up into the sluice, when getting very low down. Every man being in readiness, the first thing to be done was to let loose the water from the main creek into the upper end of the "race," that it might flow into the hose, and thence pour a perpetual stream of water all through the sluice. The water performing its part according to our wishes, the next thing to be done was for two men on each side of this long wooden trough, to throw into the three highest divisions of it, the earth as it came to hand, beginning from the surface and washing it until the bottom of this alluvial deposit was arrived at. The water continued to wash it down through the lower end of the sluice ; and in order that it might do this with greater facility, another

man took his place at the top, with a fork composed of iron attached to a wooden handle, similar to what in England is used to dig up potatoes with. The duty of this man was to loosen the earth whenever it was required, at the same time throwing out all large stones which were likely to impede the flow of the water in its proper channel. Another man was placed at the "tail race," (which was cut, as I have said, for the purpose of allowing the muddy water to pass out of our way,) whose business was to throw up on each side of it the dirt and smaller stones which would otherwise have choked up our stream, and hindered the working of it altogether. This course of working was carried on till noon, when a portion of the water was shut off, so as not to wash away the fine gold deposited at the upper ends of the three lowest boxes, where there were slips of wood, an inch and a-half in height, fixed across each one to cause the gold to lodge against them, whilst all lighter substances were washed over and carried down by the current.

On resuming our work after dinner, the water was again let loose as before, but not until the earth was cast into the sluice; otherwise the gold saved in the forenoon would incur the risk of being washed away by a brisk stream, without being checked by the dirt with which it is usually mingled. Towards the close of the day, the earth was washed out from the gold by a gentle stream passing over it, until it was reduced sufficiently to admit of its being scraped up and put into two ordinary-sized prospecting pans. It was then carefully cleansed from dirt, sand, emery, and small stones, in a pool or stream of water, whichever happened to be most convenient.

All hands having at length completed their day's work, we retired to our respective homes. The gold was given up to me, and was taken to my hut, where, after drying it by the fire, I put it on a sheet of very clean paper, quite free from grease, and blew the sand out of it without wasting any of the precious metal. I then weighed the

quantity secured, and kept a correct account of it. This I did from day to day.

Having endeavoured to give the reader some little idea how gold is usually sought after in Australia, it only remains for me now to state my experience on these diggings, and in a succeeding chapter to describe my journey thence, by the way of Melbourne, and my voyage to Sydney.

After the commencement of sluicing, I continued to work it day after day, up to my middle in water and mud, and oftentimes running over from the sluice upon my head and shoulders, thus keeping me constantly wet through from morning till night. I was therefore necessitated to stay away occasionally, and to hire another man to take my place. I strove hard to keep up to the mark; but although the spirit was quite willing, the flesh proved too weak, and was compelled to give way to rest during one or two days in each week, whilst working at the sluice. I managed, however, to bear up against toil, and cold, and weariness, for nearly five weeks; and I verily believe the results of our labour would have paid me well had I been blessed with strength of constitution equal to those whom I employed. The largest quantity of gold I procured in one day was fourteen ounces and three-quarters, troy weight. This was all found within a very small space of ground, deposited about ten feet from the surface, upon the top of yellow tenacious clay.

After working with my sluice for about five weeks, and finding my health giving way, I deemed it prudent to sell out, and give up mining operations altogether. I accordingly made my intentions known to those who were in a position to pay me down ready money for my little property, and very soon found a purchaser. The cash I immediately deposited in the branch bank of New South Wales, that I might receive the same, free of expence, on reaching Sydney.

There was a government sale of land about this time,

for town allotments, which realised very high prices. The township is called Beechworth. It, I fear, will prove of little value, except so long as large quantities of gold continue to be procured near it, as the land all around for many miles is most sterile, and is not near the main line of road between Sydney and Melbourne.

CHAPTER VI.

JOURNEY FROM SPRING CREEK TO THE GOULBOURN DIGGINGS—CONTINUATION OF OUR JOURNEY TO THE MAC IVOR DIGGINGS—THENCE TO THE BENDIGO DIGGINGS—ARRIVAL AT MELBOURNE—VOYAGE TO SYDNEY IN THE BRIG “WANDERER.”

HAVING disposed of my little property, I began to think over the course it would be wisest for me to pursue. I had not dwelt upon the subject long, however, before a gentleman whom I had known for some little time wished me to join him and another young man (whose brother I had known in London), for the purpose of visiting other gold-fields with a view to business. The elder of these two persons was formerly a chemist in Melbourne. I concluded to accompany them, thinking that this would give me an opportunity of seeing more of the country, and that I should afterwards be in a position to form more correct ideas of it generally. We made every necessary arrangement for our journey, procuring two horses and a cart, that we might take with us suitable bedding, clothing, and a tent, besides such food as travellers are accustomed to carry with them.

All things being arranged, on the morning of the 25th, after partaking of breakfast, we got the horses harnessed, and as soon as our luggage was all put into the vehicle, we took our leave of this famed gold-field, in quest of better

fortune, in some other part of the colony. We proceeded very slowly with our horses, as the ground was for the most part wet and slippery, caused by late rains. We had not gone more than a few miles before the shaft horse sunk into the bog, together with the wheels of the cart up to the axletrees. This, however, was only a beginning of those troubles which we were prepared to expect. We had to take out the horses, and fortunate indeed were we to get them over this part at all, since it often happens in wet seasons that horses, carts, and drays sink so deeply in the stiff soil as to be quite inextricable. We unloaded the cart, and carried the luggage on our backs part of the way up the side of a steep mountain, opposite to us. We then managed, by patience and perseverance, to lift the cart out of the bog and pull it part of the way up the mountain, till we reached the luggage. This being done, we proceeded slowly for a few miles, and finding a suitable place, encamped for the night. While we were busying ourselves with the horses, and putting our camp in order for the night, a suspicious-looking character came up, and made several inquiries in a very mysterious manner, which induced us to keep a sharp look-out upon him and his movements, as we were apprehensive that he might have some colleagues in the neighbourhood.

A short time after this encounter, two gentlemen came up whom we had known at Spring Creek. We immediately invited them to take one of the bush seats—not a chair, sofa, or stool of any kind; but one of nature's lounges, either on a fallen tree, or on the ground covered with luxuriant grass, instead of soft downy pillows, or cushions made of horse-hair. This was the best accommodation our airy home afforded. These two friends of ours partook of tea with us. They had been a few miles farther on to purchase cattle, and were returning home. Among other topics of conversation, we chatted about the suspicious-looking person previously alluded to, whom it appeared they had seen, and had formed similar conjectures to our own respecting him. We invited our friends to stay with us for the night, which

they promised to do if the moon did not rise early, so as to enable them to proceed. They had a distance of ten miles to walk. They accordingly wrapped their opossum cloaks around them, and lay down near the fire, till the moon rose, about five o'clock the following morning, when we all arose from our slumbers. After a hasty breakfast our two friends took their departure.

This being the first night after the renewal of my travelling, I got but little sleep, partly from thinking of home, and partly from the croaking of hosts of frogs very near to us. We resumed our journey at eight o'clock, the weather being delightfully pleasant; and finding the roads in a better state, and the country more level, we were enabled to get over the ground with greater ease to our horses. We had not gone more than a few miles before we caught sight of a cattle and sheep station, belonging to a Mr. Mackay, where we purchased a pound of fresh butter for five shillings. In the afternoon we came up to another station, where we purchased a quart of milk for one shilling. Not long afterwards we met four mounted policeman, galloping along; three out of them were so inebriated that it was a wonder they could sit on their horses.

Towards evening, we came to a swampy sort of land, with many creeks to cross over. At the first one we had to take the luggage out of our cart and carry it over on our backs, the water being nearly as high as our arms. The horses and cart being got safely over, we quickly came up to another, on attempting to cross which the horses stuck fast in the middle of it. We were obliged to rush into the water and extricate one wheel of the cart from the body of a tree with which it was entangled, before we could get the team on dry ground once more. The water and mud being rather deep, we were thoroughly saturated; but as at short distances we had other water-courses to cross, we kept on our wet clothes. We came up to the Ovens river about an hour before the sun went down. A township is formed on

either side of its banks, called Wangaratta. There were at this time about thirty small houses in sight, with several inns to supply the public with spirituous liquors, which the people of this great country are so inveterately fond of, that it is very rare to approach a public-house in any part of the bush without seeing some drunken people about it, either inside or outside.

In order to give the reader an idea what some of the innkeepers of Australia are, I may mention, that at a short distance before coming to the river, there happened to be a small public-house, situated near to a gully with water and mud in some parts of it, so as to render it almost impassable. The innkeeper, on seeing us approach with the view of crossing over, suggested the propriety of our trying that part within a few yards of his house; but on examining it with a long pole, I found that a worse place could not exist in any part of the gully. I therefore immediately passed over in safety at the spot which I at first selected. The publican's intention was sufficiently apparent. He was anxious to get us stuck fast in the mud, so as to afford him a little picking out of us whilst stopping for the night, which, of necessity, we must have done, had his instructions been complied with. Many "new chums" are led astray by such unprincipled men throughout the Australian colonies.

We crossed the river on a small punt, which was scarcely safe for a cart to be placed upon. After mounting the hill on the opposite side of the stream, we purchased a bushel of oats, at a cost of no less than fifty shillings; and after taking a small quantity of brandy to comfort the inner man, being wet through to the skin, we went on to a creek about a mile from Wangaratta, where we encamped for the night.

Next morning we saw the grave of an unfortunate policeman, who had been drowned whilst attempting to cross the creek near to our tent. The morning was frosty and cold, and the water being rather deep in the creek, and

the bank high on the opposite side, we were in doubt as to whether the horses would pull the load over or not. I volunteered to walk through, to ascertain the depth of the water, which I found would only reach up as far as my waist. We had the good luck to mount the opposite side in safety. We travelled on about seven miles, seeing no other trees than the white gum. We met many gold-diggers on the road, and one of the aborigines of the country. The roads proved very bad for four miles, in the afternoon, when we saw none but box trees, till we came alongside of a swampy plain, about two miles in length, contiguous to the road side. There were great numbers of cattle feeding on this tract. After passing the plain, the trees were, for the greater part, of the stringy bark kind. In a short time we reached a small public-house, called the "Goldseeker's Arms." A pick and a spade were very rudely painted on a board for a sign, accompanied with such a scrawl as was hardly capable of being understood. Opposite this house we purchased a quart of milk, for which we paid two shillings. We then resumed our journey towards a range of mountain scenery which had been in sight all day. After ascending for a short distance, in a spot where the mountain was partly divided by a gully, we caught sight of a beautiful stream of water, running down to meet us. Here we halted at once, and made preparations for the night. The wind was very boisterous, and the night exceedingly tempestuous; but our tent was well sheltered in a hollow, completely surrounded by huge gum and stringy bark trees.

I lay down to rest first, and desired Charley—one of my companions—to be sure and make the fire all safe before he retired, which he promised to do. I knew well that if the stringy bark tree against which the fire was kindled became ignited, and the wind continued to blow so hard, our tent and cart would be in jeopardy. When Charley lay down, I again asked his opinion about the safety of the fire, and being answered that all was right, I soon forgot

myself in slumber. I had not, however, slept much more than half an hour before I caught sight of the tent all on fire a few inches above my head. I immediately alarmed my companions, and, by our united efforts, we soon extinguished the flames, but not until they had made great havoc amongst our clothes, bedding, flour-bag, and several other articles in the cart, which we could ill afford to lose. I found that the tent had caught fire through the stringy bark tree being all in a blaze, the light fibrous parts of which having been wafted towards the tent by the wind blowing in that direction. I have often since reflected upon this incident, and have thought how easily we might all have been consumed or disabled; and, with heart overflowing with gratitude, I have often praised the Great Disposer of all events, for providentially opening my eyes early enough to enable us to rescue ourselves, and most of our creature comforts, from such a fearful calamity.

Resuming our journey next morning, we began to climb the mountain top. The road became very steep as we advanced, and on gaining the heights, a sublime and magnificent scene presented itself; as we looked back on the more level country we had recently left. From this point the scenery on all sides was quite enchanting, and whoever may travel the same path after us will, I am assured, admit that this is one of the finest views that Victoria can boast. After ascending the elevation, we pursued our path through the leafy shade of the stringy-bark forests that clothe these iron-stone ranges of mountains. These tall, primeval trees were blackened about twenty feet from the ground by the tremendous conflagrations that sometimes sweep through the bush in one continuous torrent of flame, and which prove at times dangerous to wayfaring men.

After passing over and between several mountains of inconsiderable height, we reached the township of Benalla, situated on either side of the broken river, about thirteen miles from where we started in the morning. On the whole, we found the roads tolerably good. Here we counted

about fifty wooden houses, in addition to two very nice inns, which would do no discredit to many large towns in England. There is a substantial wooden bridge leading over the river, which is the main line of road to Melbourne. To give my friends an idea of the prodigality of one man, who was standing at the bar counter of the inn, whilst I was waiting to get a few indispensable articles, I may relate what occurred in my presence. The person alluded to, in company with another, was calling for champagne, bottle after bottle, and tossing it off regardless of its cost, which was no less than twenty shillings per bottle. He actually made away with ten bottles, for which he was obliged to pay ten pounds. On remarking to the innkeeper upon the extravagance of this ten-pound treat, which was so quickly over, he assured me that it was no uncommon occurrence, and that he had actually seen bank-notes torn to pieces to light pipes with.

Having our things all ready, we turned off the main road to the right hand very abruptly, before passing over the river, in order to make for the Goulbourn diggings, which at this time had not been long found out. Our time, however, only allowed us to proceed a mile more before the sun was sinking below the horizon, when we encamped on the banks of the river for the night.

September 29th.—Near the township of Benalla we saw many blacks, both male and female, some in a state of nudity, and not a few intoxicated, lying about like brute beasts. As there happened to be good grass and water near our tent, we determined on resting the horses for a day, and making ourselves a little comfortable after the toils of travelling. In the evening, when it was quite dark, we heard a person at a distance shouting, which we answered by a similar cry, as is customary in the bush, otherwise poor wanderers would often get lost and starved to death. We soon ascertained whence the noise proceeded, for on looking out we faintly discerned a person coming towards us through a lagoon close by; as soon as he stood by our fire, we

noticed that he had only one boot on, and, besides, was not quite sober. He informed us that he had lost his horse, with bridle and saddle, and the purse containing all his money. He pointed out the direction in which he wished to be conducted, where, he stated, his companion had pitched his tent. I volunteered to accompany him to the desired spot, and, after walking about a mile, found his representations correct. His companion had fortunately discovered the missing articles; and so, after receiving many thanks from both of them, I returned to our camping ground. My companions, in the meantime, had been upon their guard, and had lit up a very large fire, as a beacon to guide me, and keep me out of the lagoon which ran parallel to the route I had to take.

In pursuing our march on the following morning we passed a Mr. Maclarin's cattle station; and, proceeding onwards about a dozen miles, we turned out the horses, and refreshed ourselves in the usual way with tea, damper, and beef. Whilst here, a mounted policeman came up; we invited him to join us with our dinner, which he readily accepted. He appeared to be a man of great respectability, and one who evidently had seen better days. We resumed our journey about two o'clock, and came up to a cattle station belonging to a doctor of divinity, who had been suspended from his functions at the township of Wangaratta. Here we purchased a quart of milk, for which we paid two shillings. We next came to a Mr. Moore's cattle station, where we purchased beef at eightpence per pound. During the day we crossed two small plains; the latter and larger one was about three miles across in the direction we passed over. Here we saw two kangaroos, and a flock of sheep, consisting of about five thousand. We travelled till almost sunset, when, coming to good grass, we pitched our tent. Near this spot we discovered the carcasses of four dead bullocks. Before leaving this camping-ground I heard that the fellow whom I had conducted safely to his tent on the previous evening had given his own horse away, and

had stolen another, which, perchance, he had seen by the road-side and preferred to his own. We had no opportunity of putting the police on his track, or he probably might have got into trouble about his new steed. Here we saw two men camping out, with only branches of the gum-tree to shelter them.

October 1st.—We prepared for another start this morning, although the sky had a rainy appearance. The morning was showery, and as we pressed on our way, our clothes were soon completely drenched. During the greater part of the afternoon it poured with rain, but a little before dark we had the felicity of beholding grass, water, and wood, all very near together, which induced us to halt for the night and turn out the horses. Our next thing was to kindle a fire, which we succeeded in doing after tearing up a shirt and blowing away at it almost despairingly for about an hour. Everything was saturated with moisture. I felt the cold for a short time as much as ever I did in my life; but on getting plenty of fire outside, and warm tea inside, we all began to feel a little more animated and cheerful. It continued to rain all night, as we could not only hear but feel, as it dropped on us through the crevices of the tent.

October 2nd, Sunday.—We rose at daybreak, and laid the wood upon the fire by cart-loads. As we had no bread, and could procure none, we mixed up flour in a pan and fried it, to satisfy our cravings till we had an opportunity to bake in a more tradesman-like manner. We halted here all day, and dried our clothes, that we might be in readiness to proceed the next morning. It rained and hailed nearly all the after-part of the day; but as we had taken up a sheltered ground with a roaring fire near us, it mattered little to us, as we were somewhat inured to these inclemencies by this time.

On the Monday morning, as soon as we could gather all up and put the horses to the cart, onward we went, till we came to Mac Guire's Punt, where the Goulbourn river is crossed. Here was a public-house and a store, where,

with great difficulty, we procured a few provisions, the people assuming so much independence that we had to beg, pray, and pay too. They extorted twenty-four shillings and sixpence to pass us and the cart over the river on the punt. This diminutive boat would not allow of the horses getting on it, consequently they had to swim over, two of the men holding up their heads the while. On reaching the opposite shore in safety, we allowed the horses to rest till they were dry, whilst we partook of refreshments. The current in this river runs very swiftly, and several people have been drowned in the act of crossing. I saw the graves of three whose corpses had been picked up. I made out the writing on two boards at the head of the graves. One was a man who had been drowned on the tenth day of November, 1852—the very day I left my home. The other recorded the drowning of a man on the second of January, 1853. It was one o'clock P.M. before we took our departure from the Goulbourn river. We had many difficult creeks to pass over, as we advanced.

October 4th.—The Goulbourn river ran parallel with our tract for miles after crossing. At length we left it altogether, turning off abruptly to the right hand for five miles more, when we rested for awhile upon some poor grass, and brackish water for our tea. At two o'clock P.M. we resumed our journey, and shortly afterwards passed over a plain with an uninhabited hut standing near to our path. A few miles farther still, we crossed over the Emu plain, where we chatted with a shepherd who was attending a flock of about 3000 sheep. He was an educated person and very communicative. We proceeded about two miles more, seeing beautiful parrots and wild ducks in abundance as we passed along. The skies threatening rain, we made ourselves snug for the night. We found the roads bad, with many dangerous spots called frog holes, which it was necessary to avoid. These are none other than small shallow water holes in swampy parts; all the plain ground was quite full of them. Travellers are compelled to ride or drive

round them, or risk the perilous alternative of sticking fast in the bog. The following evening we came up close to the Goulbourn diggings, after passing over sterile mountains, covered with iron-stone and quartz rocks, without any grass worthy of the name; and as to the water, we were sadly disappointed in not being able to procure any, except what was thick, muddy, and so brackish as not to be drinkable, save in a case of necessity like our own.

October 6th.—I visited the diggings this morning, accompanied by Charley, to purchase some bread, which was charged no less than fifteen-pence per pound. An auctioneer was selling miner's tools very cheap; nearly a cart-load was disposed of for six shillings, and a cradle for one shilling, which the jocose salesman said would hold two children, if required.

October 8th.—We mutually agreed to leave these diggings behind us, and set our faces towards Mac Ivor, as we concluded it must be fortune-losing instead of fortune-making after what we saw and heard. We therefore made off as quickly as we possibly could after breakfast, and found out the right path tolerably well. On the 13th, we came abreast of a creek full of water, where we had no little trouble to wade over, after sinking into the water up to our arm-pits.

October 15th.—It was a lovely morning when we left for the famed Bendigo diggings. We had on our way difficult creeks to drag the cart over. The mountain scenery, running parallel with the Mac Ivor Creek for several miles along our path-way, was very grand and imposing. Not long previous to our halting for the night, we saw two men coming towards us on horseback, although evidently wishing to pass without our knowing who they were, as their riding out of the tract soon convinced us; but as we were anxious to know something about the depth of the water in the river a few miles ahead of us, my companions crossed over to them to make the necessary inquiries, whilst I took care of the horses. My companions returned to me with the particulars about the river, and surprised me by

the information that these two men were the individuals accused of stealing the horse at the township of Benalla already alluded to. Each of them was riding a heavy cart horse, very different to those we had before seen them with, and were both disguised in new oil-skin over-clothing. One fellow had a pair of black eyes, whilst the other had carried away the finger-marks of some person on his neck. We had therefore no doubt but they were two of those confirmed rogues and professional thieves who infested the Australian bush and plundered the weak or unwary traveller. And the state of the country was such that it was very difficult to capture such scoundrels, as they could camp out in the bush night by night, and steal horse after horse with impunity.

The following morning, after a wet night, we had to wade through the water and mud up to our knees for four miles. We halted at length near one of the crossing places of the Campaspie river, in order to consider well the course to be taken before we committed the horses to the swollen stream. Leaving my companions here, I walked about two miles farther on, to ascertain, if possible, whether there was a less difficult place to cross. My search, however, was unsuccessful. On my way I saw a party who informed me that they had been waiting no less than nine days for the water to subside, but to no purpose. They were bound for the diggings, with a heavy dray, loaded with goods.

Returning to my companions, we chatted over the practicability of getting the horses and cart on the opposite side in safety. I soon found that they were disinclined to make the effort, and that if we crossed at all that day, it must be entirely by my own exertions. I quickly made up my mind what to do, well knowing that by delaying the passage, the water would continue still to rise, and probably keep us there many days. Having made my intention known to my companions, they pronounced the scheme altogether impracticable, and the elder of the two would not venture to cross at all till he had walked a long distance, and got a

settler to put him over in his boat. Charley, however, promised to do his best to assist me.

I went to work by first cutting down a long pole ; and after divesting myself of all clothing, except my drawers and boots, I ventured into the water, feeling my way before me with the pole, as well as on each side where the wheels of the cart would be likely to pass. I got safely over the first part, to an island in the middle of the river, from whence I soon passed across the second channel, although it was deeper, and the current running with much greater force. The latter was the only cause of apprehension, the depth being about four and a half feet. I then retraced my steps, and made up my mind to attempt the passage with the horses. But as they did not draw well together at all times, and as the shaft horse was in the habit of lying down in boggy places, I persuaded Charley to ride the leading horse over in front of me, whilst I attempted to drive the one in the shafts ; keeping upon my guard, so as to be prepared to jump out at any moment, if necessary ; but if not, to sit in the cart rather than get into the water again, which at this time was exceedingly cold.

Charley reached the opposite shore in safety, and I managed to get on the island all right, but I had still some doubts about the latter and deepest part of the river. My horse did not take to this second part very readily, but the whip urged him onward till he reached the deepest part, when he made a stop, and shook his head, as though he meant to lie down. I therefore instantly jumped into the water ; and finding the cart swimming round with the current, I seized the horse by the head, and simultaneously whipping him and calling him lustily by name, he pulled the cart on to higher ground, and then made another stop ; but in a few moments more, both horse and driver were landed on *terra firma*. We then drew off a few hundred yards from the banks of the river, and had encamped for the night before our elder companion showed his cowardly

face. We soon got warm and comfortable, and retired to rest early.

October 17th.—We all rose about six o'clock; it was a lovely morning. The water had risen about six inches in the river during the night. As our tent was pitched on the brow of a low hill, we commanded a sight of the country a long distance around us. The huge granitic rocks—the opposite side of the river—the river itself pursuing its serpentine course—the trees fringing its banks, together with the beautiful level grassy land in the background—gave the whole prospect a charming aspect. I suffered much with rheumatism from the fatigues of the previous day; but not wishing to give over travelling, we, after breakfast, moved very slowly onwards. The sand-flies were very troublesome, and annoyed the horses also very much. We arrived within a few miles of the Bendigo diggings ere we pitched our tent. The grass was sparse on this iron-stone formation, and no other trees were to be seen but iron-bark, the outside of which appear almost black, and altogether different from the gum, the box, and other trees of the country. I must not omit to state that on several occasions, and near this spot also, we passed great numbers of the mimosa trees in full bloom. It is a beautiful sight to behold the gay yellow flowers studding its green branches in great luxuriance. These graceful little trees generally abound on moist ground, and at the sides of creeks and small rivers. The bark of the mimosa is collected and exported in considerable quantities to the mother country, where it is used in tanning, and realises a high figure in the London markets.

October 18th.—On sitting down to breakfast, a dark-coloured person came up and inquired if we had seen horses belonging to him, describing them at the same time to us. We answered him in the negative. Finding him most respectful in manners and intelligent in conversation, we invited him to partake of some refreshment, of which he availed himself. In the course of our intercourse, he

expressed a wish to purchase our horses and cart, and eventually he did become their possessor, though not till we had made up our minds as to our prospects at the Bendigo diggings.

It was about ten o'clock in the morning when we caught sight of these famous diggings, where, I believe, there has been more gold procured than in any other single locality in the known world. The white hills, eight in number, at first struck us very forcibly in the distance, appearing to us like mountains of snow, shining with a dazzling beauty in the splendour of a morning without a cloud, against the clear azure sky above our heads. These white hills are composed of pipe-clay, and have proved very remunerative to the miners.

When we drew nearer to them, I caught sight of some men, with a horse and cart, at the top of one of the hills. Thinking to obtain some information, I left my companions and walked up. I found these miners very civil and communicative. They informed me that they were then working the ground over the second time, and were carting the auriferous earth to a water-hole in the distance, for the purpose of washing it out in the usual way. I thanked them for their courtesy, and on joining my companions, we went at once to Iron-Bark gully and pitched our tent, in order to make a few explorations before we came to any definite decision. There were many gullies near the above-named one, among which were Eagle-hawk and Peg-leg: the latter Charley visited, endeavouring to find out a brother of his in that locality, but without success. The water here was very brackish; the more we drank, the more thirsty we became. We found these to be far more extensive than any diggings we had previously visited, for I understood, from good authority, that after getting to the centre, a person might travel ten miles in either direction without getting clear of them. There were about seventy thousand people present at the time of my visit; and the broken condition of the ground, and the sight of thousands of tents, gave

to the whole scene a most romantic and picturesque appearance.

The government camp and the principal stores were situated about three miles from where we had taken up our camping ground. The day after our arrival we visited the government camp, the post-office, and the gold-office, whence the escort takes its departure, with gold and cash deposits of all kinds, to convey them to Melbourne. I availed myself of the opportunity to deposit here some gold, rather than carry it with me any longer, at the risk of being plundered of it by bush-rangers. At the time of depositing my treasure at the escort-office, a gentleman, who appeared to be the head of that department, condescended to show me a beautiful large specimen of quartz, having numbers of small scaly pieces of gold adhering to its external surface. It did not appear to be very valuable, except as a geological specimen.

October 22nd.—We had now parted with our animals to the coloured gentleman before alluded to, finding that such an arrangement would give general satisfaction, though I should have preferred keeping the horses, as Charley and I had agreed to proceed to Melbourne without delay, not seeing anything here likely to suit us. Our elder companion intended to give the diggings a trial for a few months. We endeavoured to purchase other horses, but not meeting with any suitable, we resolved to do as many other persons had done before us, namely, walk to Melbourne, which was nearly one hundred miles distant from this place.

It was about noon when Charley and I, after taking leave of our old friend, walked off towards the port of Victoria. After travelling about four miles, we saw a tipsy man, with horses and dray, taken in charge by the police. They tied him upon the dray, and marched them off to the police station. After walking about twelve miles, we saw a large place, neither tent nor house, fitted up for the accommodation of travellers. Here we halted, and, after partaking of refreshments, retired to rest in a long room, containing

about twenty single beds in it, which reminded me more of a military barrack than any other place I could think of. The worthy host appeared very respectable, and took every precaution against thieves, as he slept on one side of the entrance door-way, and his man-servant on the other side.

On renewing our journey, we rode a part of two days in a cart, on payment of a moderate sum. One day we met no fewer than a hundred drays, and five times that number of foot passengers, wending their steps towards the diggings.

October 24th.—This day we passed through a district known as the Black Forest. It is a barren tract of land, about a dozen miles in length, altogether a most dreary-looking place; but the scenery was somewhat improved by the sight of Mount Macedon, situated on the left-hand side of the road, about four miles in the background. In this forest, I heard, there had been several people stuck up and robbed by the bush-rangers. The government, however, was doing much in these parts towards improving the roads. We passed through the township of Gisbourn, and soon after getting on high ground, had a splendid view of the surrounding country, with distant ranges of picturesque mountains; and ere we reached the Keilor plains, where we stopped for the night, we saw the city of Melbourne in the distance, with numerous tents pitched about in all directions. We reached Keilor, a small township, ten miles from the port, just as the sun went down, having walked nearly forty miles since morning. We partook of supper, and retired to rest in a comfortable place, at an early hour, being both very tired. We paid our bill, however, at night, as we purposed rising early on the following morning, and reach Melbourne to breakfast.

October 25th.—I roused up my companion this morning, just before the sun rose above the horizon. We then walked to the city, and came to the part immediately in front of the gaol, where there were a great number of people assembled to witness the execution of two men, who

had murdered their wives. At eight o'clock we saw the culprits ascend the platform, in company with a clergyman, the gaoler, and the hangman. The preliminary proceedings being over, the drop fell, and both were launched into eternity. After hanging out of sight of the multitude the usual time, the bodies were put into coffins, and conveyed in a cart to their final resting-place, about half a mile from the prison-house. This was the first sight of the kind I ever witnessed, and it was not a very agreeable introduction to the capital of Victoria.

After witnessing the sad spectacle, we retired to a respectable-looking place to break our fast; but neither of us could eat much, or forget the sight just left behind us. I found, on inquiry, that my gold had not yet arrived at the Treasury from Bendigo; and as I could at once go on my voyage to Sydney, by the brig "Wanderer," Captain Bogis commander, I engaged my passage without delay, resolving to wait till a future period before I received my treasure. My companion accompanied me to the wharf where the vessel was lying, and took his leave of me with the intention of proceeding to Hobart Town, Van Dieman's Land, by the first vessel that sailed, to visit his brother, who was residing there.

The brig had thirty-nine souls on board. It was towed down the river below the slaughter-houses the first night, and opposite to Williamstown the following morning, where we lay at anchor till the next day. Whilst the vessel lay here, just at the entrance of Hobson's Bay, we saw a boat putting off from a ship within a quarter of a mile of us, with two men in it, who, it was evident, were trying to effect their escape, and land on the shore near Sandbridge, judging by the direction in which they were rowing the boat. As soon, however, as the captain knew of the circumstance, he immediately fired a ball at the men, and hit one of them on the side of his face; so at least it appeared to us, as blood was flowing down the cheek, and the sailor washed it off by the side of the boat. I then saw

the captain reload his gun, and fire the second time, when the ball fell about a dozen yards astern of the boat. The signal for the water police was hoisted without delay, and was promptly responded to, by a boat putting off, and giving chase to the one in question. They were not long in coming up to her, and taking the two sailors in charge as prisoners. The whole of this affair we were eye-witnesses of from the deck of our vessel, and it only lasted about half an hour altogether.

October 27th.—We rose without much rest, through the noise made by rats during the night. I heard one lady say that one of these vermin ran over her face some time in the night. A little before eleven o'clock this forenoon, every male person on board was mustered by the proper authorities, to ascertain if there were any deserters on board belonging to any ship in the port. I believe it is customary to do this. After this ceremony was over, and the anchor weighed, favoured with a light breeze, we made a few miles out into the bay, and let loose the anchor without weighing it till the following morning, at four o'clock.

October 28th.—We saw several wrecks of vessels in the bay, and numbers of birds very much like the wild duck, called the mutton bird. One of the passengers caught a peculiar fish, about eighteen inches in length. The brig passed out of Hobson's Bay at noon. It is about a mile from one head of the bay to the other. On the south head-land there is a lighthouse, with several nice houses situated near it. After getting out to sea, I noticed that the north head consisted of a reef of rocks projecting from the main land, about three miles towards the centre of the bay.

October 29th.—This morning we caught sight of Wilson's Promontory, and, passing it, sailed between seven small islands, or for the greater part barren rocks. Shortly after six o'clock, other small islands were in sight, one of which is commonly called Rabbit Island, on account of a great number of those fur-bearing animals being found

thereon. The original stock is supposed to have been left there by the captain of some vessel.

At one o'clock P.M. we lost sight of land till the following morning at six o'clock, when Cape Howe was in full view. A gentleman pointed out to me where the steamer "Monumental City," had been wrecked, a few months previously. This is a very dangerous coast in squally weather, or when the southerly winds are raging strong, unless the navigators are fully acquainted with its dangerous spots.

I had a long chat with a gentleman during the voyage, who related to me how he and a comrade had been served by two bush-rangers a few weeks before, and who since that time had both been executed for robbery and murder, forfeiting their lives indeed on the morning previous to my reaching Melbourne. This gentleman and his companion were travelling from New South Wales to Melbourne with a mob of horses for sale on speculation, when they were met by these two rogues, and robbed of all the money they were in possession of, which amounted to forty-nine pounds, independently of a cheque in the pocket of an old coat, which was strapped to one of the saddles. These rascals caught sight of the coat and inquired what it contained. The owner had the presence of mind to offer it to the robbers at once; but on seeing it to be an old one, and the opposite party so willing to give up possession of it, they refused to accept it; which was a most fortunate thing for the possessors, as these desperadoes would not have scrupled to murder both in order to get the cheque cashed. At least, such was the opinion of the person who told me the tale, and who not only lost his money, but also a suit of new clothes and a change of clean linen which he had just before put on, and which these villains actually stripped off his back, leaving him as naked as when he came into the world. As soon as the bush-rangers had decamped, the two travellers mounted their horses and galloped away as fast as their steeds could carry them, in order to overtake their live property, which was found scattered through the bush; and

sooner than lose any, my informant declared that he would have ridden into the city of Melbourne in that state of nudity. While on their way in this condition, they met two female travellers, who on drawing near enough to see that one of the strangers was in nature's garb, immediately scampered off the road into the bush as fast as their legs could carry them. The nakedness of this unfortunate wild-looking man, seated like a spectre upon his horse, was ultimately covered by a compassionate bullock-driver, who presented him with a few old garments, which sufficed till more becoming raiment could be purchased in Melbourne, where, on their arrival, they produced their recovered mob of horses in safety.

Returning now to my short voyage, I may state that on the last day of October we sighted Browlee harbour and Jarvis Bay. It is here a most bold-looking coast, with towering perpendicular rocks. At ten o'clock P.M. we sighted the light-house on the south head of Port Jackson; at daylight the following morning we were a mile north of Botany Bay; and shortly afterwards I had the pleasure of setting my feet on *terra firma* once more in the city of Sydney.

CHAPTER VII.

JOURNEY ON HORSEBACK OVER THE BLUE MOUNTAINS, AND
BACK TO SYDNEY TO TAKE HORSES OVERLAND TO
MELBOURNE—ADVENTURE WITH A STRAY HORSE—
CAMPING NEAR SOME NATIVES—UPSETTING THE
RATION CART—GETTING THE AXLETREE MENDED—
SCARCITY OF GRASS—BUSH FIRES—CAMPING AT
KILLEEN—THE BROKEN LIMB, ETC., ETC.

THE first thing I did after landing in the capital of New South Wales was to stray into an artist's shop, and have a daguerreotype likeness of myself taken, adorned as I then was with a seven months' beard. I might well have been taken for a person belonging to the Jewish persuasion. The picture I carefully packed up, and forwarded by the "Great Britain" steam vessel to my friends in England.

From the time of my landing up to the eighteenth of November, I was busying myself in acquiring information as to how I might employ my small capital to the greatest advantage. At length I came to the conclusion that I would lay it out on horses, and take them overland to the Victoria markets, for at that time horse-flesh was selling at an exorbitant price. I accordingly advertised for a partner to join me. Numerous applicants came forward, and eventually I agreed to join one of them, and to proceed with him on a journey over the Blue Mountains, as far as a station belonging to a Mr. Grant, in order to ascertain all particulars relative to about a thousand head of horses running

on his land, near Little Hartley, which was within ten or a dozen miles of Mount Victoria, and about eighty miles on the main track leading towards Bathurst.

The gentleman whom I joined was highly respectable, and had recently arrived in Australia from Ireland. We consulted as to how we had better take the journey; whether by the mail-cart, which was a miserable conveyance, the passengers being often compelled, through the badness of the roads, to walk many miles of the way—or whether to purchase a horse each. I approved of the latter course in preference to the other, knowing that it would prove the most economical in the end. We were, however, so near booking our place by the mail-cart as even to visit the office for that purpose, when I prevailed on my companion to change his intention and to accompany me to a horse market, where we succeeded in purchasing two animals suitable for the journey; and in the after-part of the day we tested their good qualities to our satisfaction, by riding them to Botany Bay. On our way thither, we fell in with a Captain M——, a friend of my companion, to whom he introduced me, and who immediately mounted his horse, and accompanied us, riding all the way to Sir Joseph Banks's Hotel, which is situated on the north shore of the bay. Here we spent half an hour, looking over the beautiful botanical specimens, and the indigenous birds and animals of this great country. We returned quite satisfied with our new steeds, purposing on the morrow to commence our journey. I found out afterwards that the gentleman who accompanied us to Botany had lately arrived from the Cape of Good Hope, where he held a commission in the Cape Mounted Rifle Corps, and served under Sir Harry Smyth.

November 19th.—I rose at five o'clock this morning, and after cleaning my boots (which it was fashionable for every one to do in these golden times), I called up my companion; and both being equipped for our journey, we rode off to Paramatta, a distance of eighteen miles, to take breakfast. We refreshed ourselves, and rested the horses till past noon,

when we were again on the road going towards Penrith, a distance of twenty miles from Paramatta. It threatened rain several times throughout the day, but we were fortunate enough to accomplish our journey without getting wet. We passed through Penrith, and crossed the Nepean river on a punt, just as the sun went down. Hearing of a public-house two miles further on, at the foot of the Blue Mountains, we trotted on and made it out before dark. Here we took up our quarters for the night, and, as usual, heard and saw several tipsy men about.

November 20th.—We rose in good time, and attended to the horses before taking breakfast. The poor animals fared badly, although we paid ten shillings per head for the night. They gave us sour bread for breakfast, with eggs and fresh butter tolerably good; but to make up for all other failings, the host was surprisingly civil; and on taking up our boots, we hardly knew them, they were so bright. We were astonished to find Day and Martin in use forty miles from the capital. Having discharged our bill, we mounted our steeds, and commenced climbing the mountain. We found the road for the first mile to be very steep, although there has been a great deal of convict labour expended in cutting and levelling the ascent. The road here winds and zigzags a great deal till the most difficult part is passed, when all at once it becomes so sandy, that teams have hard labour to draw up anything like a heavy load.

We made the Blue Mountains Inn by noon, which is only eighteen miles from our morning's starting-place. Here we took dinner, having the misfortune to get sour bread again with our roast beef. The weather at this time looked very tempestuous. We rested the horses till two o'clock, and then resumed our journey, wishing to reach a public-house about fifteen miles off, at the base of Mount Victoria. Soon after, trotting onwards, the mail-cart, with four horses attached, passed us, which we kept in sight a considerable time, as we moved on but slowly, and the passengers by the mail, six in number, were very often obliged to walk, the roads

being so bad. Towards evening the sun was obscured, and the heavens were covered with thunder-clouds. We caught a little wetting, but soon got dry again, the weather being so warm. The roads improved as we neared Mount Victoria, and before descending it, we met a man on horse-back, who informed us of the mail-cart having been upset over a precipitous part of the mountains. It was dark, however, before we came up to the spot, and being entire strangers to the region, we dismounted and led our horses down very carefully. We rode on to a second public-house, as we were informed that the one at the base of the mountain was filled with the mailman and his maimed passengers, one poor man being all but dead.

We found our hostelry a comfortable place, and learned that our route from thence to Mr. Grant's station turned off the main track abruptly, immediately opposite this inn. This neighbourhood I found was called Little Hartley; and on seeing it by daylight the next morning, I counted eight huts, independently of the one we slept in.

At six o'clock next morning we mounted our horses and pushed forward across the bush; and after riding up and down mountains the greater part of the way, we reached our destination by eleven o'clock in the forenoon. We found Mr. Grant at home, who received us very hospitably, entertaining both man and beast. He was most candid respecting our business with him. After hearing what he had to say, we doubted very much the possibility of collecting the wild horses of which we were in quest, the country being so mountainous for many miles around. It was a task which would prove difficult even for persons well acquainted with the ground, as well as expert and experienced at such employment. Notwithstanding our long journey, therefore, we came to the conclusion that we had much better sacrifice the time and money this trip had cost us than enter into the speculation.

After thanking Mr. Grant, accordingly, we departed, retracing our steps; but we had only gone back about two

miles, when the thunder began to peal, and the lightning to flash across our path in a fearful manner. We took shelter in a hut just in time to keep ourselves dry, for we had not been under cover five minutes when the rain descended in torrents. Here we fell in with some warm-hearted Irish, who welcomed us with smiling countenances, and would not hear of our departing till we had taken some refreshment. We were rather amused to see the women and children without any covering whatever to their feet and legs; and still more so when my companion lit a cigar, to see the females bring forth their short black pipes, seemingly to out-vie him in the volume of smoke they could puff out from the burning of the fragrant weed.

We reached the main road again by four o'clock P.M.; and on inquiring about the unfortunate mail-cart passengers, we were informed that one was still insensible and not likely to survive, while the remainder were dreadfully bruised from head to foot. Three horses out of the four, too, had been killed on the spot.

I was very much struck with the scenery whilst ascending the Victoria mountain, at the spot where we led our horses down so carefully the preceding night. In the distance on our left hand were to be seen the granite rock, towering in the air to a considerable height, and resembling in shape the ruins of an ancient giant castle. On our right hand, when standing near a bridge near where the accident occurred, is to be seen a deep gully, extending and widening gradually till it forms a vast level valley in the distance, containing thousands of acres of land with perpendicular granitic rocks hemming it in. My companion did not so much admire this grand and romantic scenery, it being upon too large a scale to please him; neither could I prevail on him to venture down the precipice with me, to view the wreck of the mail-cart, harness, and horses. The first thing I caught sight of was the battered cart, with one of its wheels projected a great way from the other parts. I then saw the harness, all scattered and torn to atoms

against the rocks and stumps of falling trees ; and last, but not least, there lay the wounded remains of the three poor horses. They seemed to have gone down head foremost, so that their necks were apparently broken.

Having witnessed this unpleasant sight, I returned to my companion, who had taken charge of my grey horse during my visit to the valley below. Whilst riding towards our resting-place, we chatted about this fearful accident, from which we had been so providentially preserved, and with hearts filled with gratitude we went on our way rejoicing that we had not ventured in the mail-cart. We could not help seeing the finger of God in the circumstance. We came up to the desired inn soon after dark, where we halted for the night, and found it an agreeable place.

November 22nd.—We got clear of the Blue Mountains about four o'clock P.M. I noticed several nice springs of water at the top of these huge mountains, which to the traveller prove very acceptable, especially in the height of summer, when they never cease to flow. I understand there is a beautiful waterfall to be seen within a few miles of the main track ; but our time did not allow us to gratify our curiosity in this particular. As we had no guide, we might have lost ourselves for a day or two among the sandstone and granitic rocks, with no food for either man or horse. These mountains are for the greater part covered with scrub and trees, interspersed with various indigenous flowers, without any considerable quantity of grass growing thereon. I believe the distance across the mountains, by the main track, is considered to be about forty miles. These Blue Mountains are so called on account of their azure appearance in the distance, which certainly is a correct definition, as they exactly correspond with their designation, especially on bright clear days. We had recrossed the Nepean river, and reached the township of Penrith, just after the sun had sunk below the horizon. We found out a comfortable house and good accommodation for the night.

The following day brought us once more back to Sydney,

when my companion sold his horse, and gave up the idea of attempting to venture six hundred miles overland to Port Victoria. I, however, still adhered to my determination, and kept my grey horse till I had sufficiently matured my plans to commence the journey. In the meantime I took a friendly cup of tea with my Blue Mountain friend and his lady, both of whom I found worthy of every respect.

A few days after this dissolution of partnership, I saw another person who had previously answered my advertisement; and after making every necessary inquiry as to his character, we entered into an engagement. We hired two men, purchased a light cart to carry our provisions, tent, bedding, etc., and after purchasing a goodly number of horses, took our leave once more of the capital of New South Wales. It was on the twenty-ninth of November when we drove our horses as far as a village called Ashfield, six miles from our starting-place. There were three of us to manage the horses, and one to take charge of the horse and cart. We should not have hired but one person, except that these two young Irishmen were "new chums," and were anxious to visit Melbourne, without possessing the requisite funds to enable them to go by sea. We consequently got the services of both for the same wages as one would otherwise have been entitled to.

The first night we were not so comfortable as we expected to be afterwards. Travellers are best off in the bush, roughing it in right good earnest; or, on the other hand, out of it altogether, taking things as smoothly as their position in life will enable them with propriety. For my own part, I always think more of the first night or two on commencing a journey in the bush, than all the remainder. On the first night I had

A DREAM OF HOME.

I've dreamt of countries far away
Ofttimes since I began to roam,
Never forgetting, night nor day,
The faces in my English home.

Still I think of her I love,
And tenderly repeat her name ;
For in whatever clime we rove,
Affection's heart is still the same.

November 30th.—We resumed our journey at nine o'clock this morning, the weather being very warm, and the roads covered with dust. I chatted with a gentleman, a Mr. W——, who accompanied us for about an hour; he presented me with his card, and gave me an invitation to visit him at his residence in Ashfield Park. On explaining my enterprise, he expressed a wish to take a trip over-land with me at some future period. Shortly after parting with him, we fell in with two young men on horseback, whom I had been familiar with at the Ovens diggings. They insisted on our going to a public-house near by, and partaking of a glass of grog together. This practice is so common in Australia, that when friends meet, one and all are invited to share in whatever is partaken of, even if there should happen to be twenty persons present; and as we commonly say, "Love me, love my dog," so it is with these hospitable colonists.

Everything went on tolerably well for several days. Of course, there are various incidents occurring daily to primitive travellers such as we were whilst plodding through this romantic-looking country. One day we were begging, praying, and paying to get shoes put on a saddle horse; another hour we were gossiping with professional gentlemen located in the bush; another time our cart was upset against the stump of a tree; one morning our two Irish novices were as awkward as one of the Australian bullocks would be with the minie rifle; one mid-day, one of our Paddies got lost in the bush for many hours. About sixty minutes after he was missed I might have been seen galloping about in search of him; a succeeding half-hour I was co-o-o-ing as loud as my lungs allowed me, while about sun-down I had found the Irish prize.

December 6th.—We halted at Paddy's river to refresh

both men and animals. Here I prevailed on one of our Irish lads (both fine fellows, averaging six feet) to mount a colt, after treating the animal in the usual way, which terminated without any misadventure. Near this spot I saw a poor man with a cancer inside his mouth. He informed me that he was continually using Holloway's Ointment, and, like the major part of the bush population, seemed to have great faith in it. I could not but sympathise with him in his affliction.

December 7th.—We passed again through Marulan; but instead, as before, taking the Braidwood track, we passed on to the right-hand main road towards the township of Goulbourn. We were caught in a tempest previous to reaching Goulbourn; though, on the whole, the weather has been fine—clear days, generally without a cloud to be seen wafted along before the wind. The heat being rather oppressive to us “new chums,” we were prone to fly to nearly all the creeks and water-holes to quench our thirst with Adam’s ale, which is never known to injure, being so tempered by the heat of the sun. The land between the townships of Marulan and Goulbourn is for the greater part sterile and mountainous. We saw numbers of drays on the road drawn by bullocks, one of which got stuck fast in the bog. No fewer than twenty-two animals were attached to it for the purpose of pulling it out, but the chains giving way, foiled this first attempt. These broken links being repaired by the stout-hearted drivers, another effort was made, which was successful.

Next morning we missed three horses, and my partner and myself rode a great number of miles in quest of them, leaving our two men to guard the rest. We, however, had to give several horses a spell of sharp running before we succeeded in driving them back to our tent. I returned with two young ones, and my companion drove the other in about noon, having found him eight miles from our camping ground. He was obliged to cross and recross the Wollondilly river on his way out and back. We passed through

the pretty little town of Goulbourn in the after-part of the day. This was decidedly the best inland town I had seen either in New South Wales or in Victoria. It consists of neat, respectable-looking houses, with an English church and chapel of no mean construction. There are many superior buildings used as stores, and a branch bank, which is a great convenience to settlers all around, as well as to travellers at times. I deposited a small amount of cash myself, which I was not likely to want, in order to receive the same in Sydney. There is a considerable space of ground reserved in the centre of the town, in the form of a square, where the post-office is situated. The streets are very nicely laid out at right angles, and on the whole it assumes quite a bustling appearance, with carts, drays, and saddle horses, which I conjectured to be the property of various neighbouring settlers, and which were waiting whilst the owners were at the stores making their purchases for domestic purposes. The town is situated on a plain, contiguous to the Wollondilly river, and is surrounded by beautiful mountain scenery. When passing out of it, we noticed a large brick building, which proved to be a steam flour mill, and a tannery about two hundred yards from it.

December 9th.—Noon brought us to a plain about four miles across, in every direction. Here we met seven bullock drays, laden with wool for the port town. While halting for a short rest, we resolved to test the qualities of one of the colts. No sooner had we put the tackling on, than he unfortunately escaped from us; and being a first-rate "bucker," as they term them in this country, it elicited many hearty laughs from all of us. My partner mounted a horse and rode after the colt, which was quickly followed by another young horse, that eventually joined the first. Away they galloped as fast as their legs could carry them, till the person in pursuit heading them, turned both back, and got them to stand still. But whilst leaving his quiet saddle horse in order to disentangle the one which had the trap-pings on him, the two instantly galloped off together,

followed by the third, with the bridle and saddle on its back, without its rider. One of our Irishmen having just mounted another horse, I desired him to ride off immediately into the bush, in the direction the three horses had taken, as there was not a moment to lose, they being out of sight at the time. I could not prevail on the cowardly fellow, however, to do so. Ordering him to dismount, the next moment I was riding as fast as the horse could go across the plain into the bush, and fortunately recovered our property before dark. We lost half a day by this adventure.

The following day we crossed the Fish river, and pitched our tent on the south-west bank for the night. On the morning after, we were in trouble again, losing another horse, although his legs were hobbled together. Three of us in our turns rode out in different directions, day after day, trying to find him, without success. There was only one more chance left us, and that was by riding a hundred miles off the main track altogether, to the spot where we knew the horse was brought up. I volunteered to do so, whilst my companion should travel on with the two men about ten miles per day till my return. I left them with this understanding, anticipating that I should join them again in about a week at Gundagai, which was about seventy miles ahead. Starting on this errand, I rode on day after day, making inquiries as I proceeded. I met with great hospitality wherever I went; but one morning, on riding up to a hut to inquire my way, as I had little besides the sun to guide me in my travels, I was struck with horror on being informed that at this hut a most brutal murder had been perpetrated. The murderer and the murdered man had been known to each other for some months previously, and were addicted to drinking, which is the greatest curse to this otherwise favoured country. The murderer had previously threatened to commit the crime, and to roast the heart of his victim after carrying out his horrible threat, which I understand was done to the very letter, by frying and eating a portion of it. The murderer, at the time of

my passing, was in custody. The case was proved against him, and he was afterwards executed at Berrima.

One day, whilst horse hunting, I felt puzzled to know how to escape from the mountains on the one side and a river on the other. I had my old friend, the grey horse, with me. I dismounted, and, leading her, climbed the highest mountain top I could see. Here I fortunately discovered that there was a small patch of land, about eight miles in the distance, apparently cultivated, where I was likely to find some person to speak with. In this I found myself not mistaken. After taking particular notice of the bearing of the sun on that point, I descended the mountain on the opposite side to that of my ascent. I was obliged to lead my horse down carefully, as in some parts it proved quite precipitous, and long before reaching its base I lost sight of the spot of cleared ground altogether. But the sun had proved a faithful guide before, and now, following its direction, I found the desired spot, where I gained all the information required, and immediately rode two miles farther to a settler's house, where our lost horse was likely to be found. A few hundred yards before reaching Mr. H——'s hut, I saw a river of no considerable depth, and a lass who was driving a great number of cows through the water towards their home on the opposite side. I was quite taken aback, however, to see this daughter of Eve gather up her dress, and, without any hesitation, rush through the stream after her cows.

I found Mr. H—— at home, and partook of refreshment with him. Afterwards he very kindly accompanied me on horseback, riding over his ground in search of the missing horse; but it proved labour in vain.

Whilst here, a workman of Mr. H——'s killed a black snake, about five feet in length. It is surprising that the children do not get bitten by these venomous reptiles, as they were all without stockings and shoes, and could seldom be persuaded to wear any, though there were plenty in the house.

Finding that the horse could not be found, I returned to rejoin my companions. I took a different route, however; and coming to a Mr. M——'s house on Christmas eve, I was prevailed upon to spend the next day there, and to rest my horse. Two bullocks were to be killed the evening I reached this hospitable house. I was invited, therefore, to take a double-barreled gun, and shoot two of them, which were pointed out to me from a mob of about a hundred in the stock-yard. This I consented to, having been accustomed to the use of fire-arms ever since my youth. The overseer had no wish to fire off the gun; I therefore undertook the work, and knocked down the two beasts without firing a third shot. When I reached Gundagui, I heard of my partner passing over the river the day after Christmas. I overtook him on the 28th of December, towards evening, when he told me of eight horses having strayed, and that he had been riding all day without finding them. My partner and the men had proposed to watch the horses all night, taking their turns, and dividing the night into three separate watches. It appeared, however, that one of these Irish novices, during his turn in the night, had allowed the horses to go away; but whether he slept or not during the time, I cannot say.

There were numbers of the aborigines, male and females, camped near us this evening, most of them being in a state of nudity. We gave one (who could speak a little English) some old clothes and tobacco, promising him also some white money on condition that he would track out our stray horses for us on the following morning, which he consented to do; but as soon as daylight approached, we only saw the remains of their fires: the camp was broken up, and they were clean gone. We, however, discovered the horses in the afternoon. My partner and I went in quest of them, but on our return we found that our two Irish vagabonds had set the bush on fire, and had not energy and presence of mind enough to extinguish the flames before it had extended for

miles. Some of our clothing, too, got scorched up through their inactivity.

After these few incidents, we continued our course day by day, dividing between us the duty of watching the horses by night. I chose the first watch for myself, and many a ramble have I had at night over creeks, table-lands, precipices, and mountains, to keep these restless animals as near together as it was prudent to do. Sometimes they would quietly feed, allowing me to repose on the mountain side, to view the stars or the full moon in its brightness and beauty; while on other nights I have walked and rode about in the dark, scarcely able to discern horses from rocks or stumps of trees, and perchance almost knocked down by running or riding against the branches of stringy bark or gum trees.

A few days after leaving the district where our men set the bush on fire, our cart was again turned topsy-turvy, and the axletree broken; and I was compelled to carry it twenty-two miles on horse-back to get it welded together. When asking the charge for the repair, I was not a little astonished to hear the blacksmith say, three pounds ten shillings. I paid the money, however, and returned to our camp.

Up to the time we reached Albury, the grass had been tolerably plentiful; but after crossing the river on the Victoria side, to the time we reached a cattle and sheep station called Killeen, within a hundred miles of Melbourne, it proved very scanty. In many parts it had been burnt up by the bush fires which had devastated the country round to a great extent. We rested our horses here, and pitched our tent within half a mile of a huge mountain, where there was a beautiful spring of water running down its side. Here the pasturage was much more plentiful than in some other parts. As our horses were thin in consequence of their scanty feeding, my partner and I concluded upon resting them on this inviting spot for a fortnight, in order to plump them out well previous to taking them into the Melbourne

market, where the condition of horses is of course the great desideratum. Whilst encamping here, we sold two horses to a Mr. B——, and one to a workman of his; and eventually the government stud-master purchased a fourth for the use of the mounted police, there being troopers stationed near our camping-ground. We continued here with the horses until the first of February, 1854, when we resolved to proceed to Melbourne, where horses, we heard, were fetching good prices.

February 2nd.—The weather during our stay under the mountain had been exceedingly fine, with occasional hot days, and this morning broke in beauty. Striking our tent after breakfast, we were preparing the last stage of this long journey, when, alas! I was laid low at a stroke. Everything was in readiness, and my companion had just gone ahead with the provision cart, leaving one man to assist me in getting the horses off the ground. I was in the act of mounting a fine grey horse, one that I had ridden many times before, when, strange to relate, the animal reared before I had thrown my right leg over him, and in a twinkling over he came on his back; but, worse than all, the hinder part of the animal fell with great force on my unfortunate left leg, producing a compound fracture. I sent the man to call my companion back with the cart, who had by that time advanced about a mile from where I lay on the ground. He returned, however, as quickly as he possibly could, and, with assistance, put me into the cart, and took me to a hut about a mile from where the accident occurred. This hut belonged to a Mr. R——, who was from home at the time; but his wife gave permission for me to use it as long as I required. The next thing was to send for a medical man; and, fortunately, there happened to be one living with a settler about four miles distant. The doctor made his appearance in due course, and went to work, shaving up bark for splints. The leg was set within about five hours from the time it was broken. The weather being very hot, it was fortunate for me that inflammation

did not set up. It was a mercy, moreover, that the horse did not fall with all its weight on my body, or the consequences might have been far more serious to me.

A few days after my accident I wrote a short epistle to my dear wife, in which I stated that I was delayed here for a few weeks, and at a future time I would mention the cause of it. I did not wish to agitate her tender heart, knowing that it could do me no good, while it certainly would make her more unhappy, to be acquainted with the accident.

I may relate here, with extreme pleasure, how much sympathy I met with from my kind host and hostess. Some of their neighbours, too, particularly Mr. and Mrs. C., behaved very kindly, the wife bringing me clean linen, and many nice things, to lighten this heavy trial, which I felt the more from being so many thousands of miles from home; but, considering myself a traveller in a foreign land, I had blessings heaped upon my head far greater than my deserts.

TO MY BENEFACTRESS.

She solaced the weary, she strengthened the weak,
And soft was her voice when prostrate and sick;
When want and affliction on me did attend,
This sister of charity prov'd my best friend.

The Great and Allwise Being who laid on me this rod of affliction still extended his merciful hand towards me, and his Spirit seemed to whisper in my ears—"Be of good cheer; I am Alpha and Omega, and never afflict my children, except for their everlasting good." These words also came home to my soul: "Through much tribulation you must go, ere you enter into the kingdom prepared for the children of God." I found my doctor a most agreeable person; he visited me every day for the first fortnight, generally sitting down to chat every time he came to see me.

My companion waited eight days in consequence of my accident, during which time the horse-market had fallen

no less than forty per cent., and continued so afterwards for a considerable time, which was anything but cheering. He procured me a male nurse with no little difficulty, who, poor fellow ! proved to be scarcely in his right mind. However, in my case it was Hobson's choice, and I bore it with as much patience as I could reasonably be expected to show. My companion ultimately took the horses to Melbourne, and sold them full forty per cent. less than they would have realised a few weeks previously. He paid the proceeds of the sale into a bank for me to receive at a future time, writing me all particulars relative to the same. I exceedingly regret never having had the pleasure of seeing him again.

Six weeks after my nurse came to attend on me, I substituted an elderly person in his stead, whom I employed eight weeks. To each of them I gave twenty shillings per week for their services, independent of board and lodgings. The second nurse proved dirty in his habits ; he was also an habitual drunkard, and oftentimes absconded from morning till night, neither knowing nor caring whether any person called to see me or not.

I kept my bed nearly ten weeks before I was able to attempt getting about, and during that time I had but little rest. My medical man could procure only one crutch for me, and with that and a stout stick I hobbled about until the fourth day, when I fell down. As the effect of my fall, I was compelled to take to my bed again for another fortnight, bathing my leg night and day the greater part of the time with cold water, to keep down the inflammation. When I was able to get up again, I contrived to have another rough crutch made, rather than risk another serious casualty. I was visited daily by some kind person or other, who brought with them books for the amusement of the mind, and many little luxuries for the body, which I highly prized, and which will ever be gratefully remembered by me.

During the time I lay here, I did not let my nearest and dearest relatives know the particulars of my accident. I

heard about this time of the death of one of my beloved boys, which weighed down my heart with sadness for many days.

After discharging my nurse, at the end of fourteen weeks, I remained at the hut another fortnight, making a stay of about four months altogether. Even at the end of that long period, I was unable to bear much weight on the fractured leg, and could scarcely walk a hundred yards even with the aid of two sticks. I, however, made up my mind to go to the port town the first opportunity; and after thanking the good people for their kindness towards me, and settling my bills, I took leave of my worthy doctor, and rode to a public-house a few miles distant on the main road, purposing to wait there until I saw some conveyance that would take me on to Melbourne.

I will now bid adieu to this sad tale of disappointment and affliction, trusting that the reader will accompany me patiently whilst I briefly describe another short journey which I took.

CHAPTER VIII.

A TRIP TO GUNNING FLAT—LOST IN THE BUSH ALL NIGHT—JOURNEY FROM CANU STATION TO KILLEEN—CONTINUATION OF JOURNEY TO GEELONG—A TRIP ACROSS HOBSON'S BAY TO MELBOURNE—THIRD VOYAGE FROM THENCE TO SYDNEY.

ON the 25th of May, 1854, I bargained with a man to attend upon me while in my disabled condition. With his assistance I managed to get upon the dray. There were five horses attached to it. My leg was sadly shaken by the vehicle running over the rocks, it being of course without springs; but rude as it was, I gladly availed myself of its aid. The person with me rendered himself more civil than men are generally found to be in this independent country. We were favoured with fine weather for the greater part of our journey, the nights proving rather cold. One night I was rather alarmed at being roused abruptly from my sleep by a noise produced by the falling of a huge gum tree, which as it descended crackled like myriads of small fire-works. These kind of alarms very often occur to travellers in the bush. An unfortunate Chinaman was killed a short time since, while seated under one of these trees.

On passing through Kilmore I was surprised to see so large a number of houses. The place must contain a great population, although the habitations are rude in their construction and of small dimensions. It is the largest town, but not the most compact, that I had hitherto

seen inland between Sydney and Melbourne. It is not laid out at right angles, but is placed on the ground in a heterogeneous mass. The population consists principally of Irish. The land for a considerable distance adjacent to the town is composed of a rich alluvial deposit, producing excellent crops of vegetables and cereal plants, and there are a goodly number of acres under cultivation.

After leaving Kilmore we found the roads dreadfully bad till we arrived within about twenty miles of the port town; they are then macadamised all the way into Melbourne. Upon about ten miles of the worst part of this primitive track, the five horses had desperate work to get the dray along. Part of the time they were up to their bellies in mud and water. I greatly dreaded an upset in some of these miry places. We passed numbers of dead bullocks and broken-down drays, with an occasional one stuck fast in the bog, before we arrived at our destination.

It was the last day of May, dark and late at night, before the drayman put me down safe (but not sound) at the Farmer's Arms Hotel, not knowing where to find the most comfortable place at that time of the night. It turned out to be a nice house, with most things tolerably comfortable; but not intending to stay there more than a day or two, I put up with the annoyance arising from the presence of some noisy Irishmen, who were vociferating lustily and threatening to knock each other's brains out. During my stay in Melbourne I visited several friends, who were delighted to see me, having been at my house in England a few years before.

I had not finished my little business until the eleventh of June. I had to call at the treasury for some gold dust which I had previously sent by escort from Bendigo; also at one of the banks, and another government office, to receive forty-five pounds for a horse sold to the government stud-master about four months prior to this.

June 12th.—I took leave of my friends this morning, getting on board the "Ballarat" steam-tender to proceed

down the river to Hobson's Bay ; and after being assisted on board the "Yarra Yarra" steam vessel, she quickly got under weigh, and made a pleasant run of sixty-two hours to Sydney, where we were all landed at four o'clock on the morning of the fifteenth of June.

Many would suppose, after the accident which I have described, that it was imprudent on my part to attempt dabbling in horses again, or to venture on the back of one, at least until my broken leg was fully healed, so as to allow of my jumping into the saddle unassisted. However, every one to his taste ; for while horse-riding or horse-selling and driving is alluring to some, so, on the contrary, it is repulsive to others, who have no aptitude for an active life in the wilds of Australia. I must confess, amid all the trials I have hitherto endured through this primitive mode of pushing one's way in the world, that I have had my enjoyments to counterbalance my troubles. This wild life had sufficient charms to induce me to fit out the second time, for the purpose of going overland with horses or cattle, whichever I thought most likely to prove lucrative. After having been dormant upwards of four months, I began to detest an inactive life, although I could still but feebly walk with the aid of two large sticks.

My mind, then, being fully made up, I hired a man, purchased three horses with their equipments, and provided such an outfit as my experience suggested, and which admitted of being transported on the back of a pack-horse. On the eighteenth day of June (a memorable day for the heroes of Waterloo), my man, a Scotchman, might have been seen assisting me to mount one of my horses, with my two sticks slung under my left arm, in military array. The second animal he mounted himself, and the third he led, having all the baggage strapped on its back. The weather appeared gloomy, and threatened to rain shortly after leaving Sydney. We marched on the road about six miles the first day, it having been late before we made a start.

Nothing particular occurred during the first part of this journey, except that we were stopped by the overflowing of some rivers, which rendered them unfordable, and caused us to go a few miles out of our proper course, as well as get wet to the skin on a few occasions. I was fortunate, in one respect, in travelling with a pack-horse instead of a light cart, as in the latter case we never could have gone ahead the whole of the eight days during which it proved so wet.

I made every inquiry on the journey about the prices of cattle and horses, and eventually concluded to make a selection of the latter animals at a place called Gunning Flat, so named, I believe, on account of its really being a flat, surrounded with mountains of considerable height. The flat of itself was but small, comparatively speaking. I reached a Mr. H——'s house on the flat on the first day of July, and after consulting him respecting his horses, and those of his neighbours, I decided upon halting and making my purchases to the best advantage. I was most hospitably received. My man and I took up our quarters with Mr. H—— and his family, instead of pitching our tent hard by. This locality is only a few miles from the Lachlan river, where Hovel's creek disembogues. This creek is named after Captain Hovel, the discoverer. The river is upwards of two hundred miles from Sydney at this particular part.

After dinner, Mr. H—— (who is a powerful man, near six feet high, and born in the country) mounted his horse and rode out with me to see after some of his four-footed animals. We returned at eve without making more than one purchase, as it is by chance only that the wild creatures can be met with over such a sweep of country, unless it be known what water-hole or creek they frequent, it being generally the rule, when known, to catch them in such places about mid-day.

A few days after this I saw a Mr. L——, and arranged with him and his neighbour to combine their strength

together in order to get all the horses they could, so that each of them might have the chance of selling what I thought proper to select. I could by this time, with care, manage to gallop a horse and assist a little, but could not venture to descend precipitous places such as others recklessly rode down. As fast as I bought the horses, my man was employed in shepherding them in the day time, and putting them in a paddock for the night. In the branding of my horses, it caused great excitement to see these muscular fellows throw the rope over the heads of the animals and pull them up to the spot, for the purpose of applying the burning iron to their shoulders. I could get but little work done without the rum bottle, though I quite detest it for many reasons.

During my stay here, I hired a black man, answering to the name of Jacky Dixon, to work for me, and was rather amused at his uncommon particularity as to what saddle he rode upon, or what horse he put it upon afterwards. Very few of the aborigines can be induced to work for any great length of time; and they say that the white fellow is a great fool to work so hard.

On the eighteenth of July—just a month from the time of leaving the capital of New South Wales—my man and I were mounted once more for travelling, in company with four others, settlers, who volunteered to go the first day's stage with me as far as the Canu Station, where I purposed resting for the night. As I knew nothing of the road across the bush, and it lay across a mountainous region, exceedingly intricate, these worthies aspired to the honour of driving my horses without the assistance of either my man or myself. I accordingly gave them permission to do so, on their promising me not to ride away from us altogether, well knowing as they did that it would be difficult for strangers to find the desired station. After treating them to grog, away they rode, galloping their horses and cracking their long stock whips, which made a noise almost as loud as the report of small fire-arms,

leaving us to follow by scent, for we soon lost sight of them.

I fell in with a very civil man, who accompanied us to the brow of a mountain, in order to point out the precise direction for us to take in order to reach the station alluded to. I then seized the helm, and taking the sun for my compass, steered over fearful-looking places; but, fortunately, we did not get wrecked, although sailing over many rocks ere we came up to the hut, which we made just as it was becoming dark. On inquiring about my horses, I was not a little surprised to learn that they had not been seen. I consequently rode back on the following morning to ascertain all particulars; and on reaching a Mr. F——'s station, ten miles towards the flat left the day previously, I found that my horses had been put into his stock-yard for the night, and in the morning were sent on to me; but as they had taken a different route to mine, I had no chance of meeting with them.

I now felt easy about the safety of the animals, and dined with these good-natured people. Here I heard of the inebriated condition* of the party to whom I had entrusted the horses, and who had been persuaded to leave them here all night—an act of kindness for which I did not fail to thank our host and hostess. I took my leave of these good people, and by their suggestion took a different route to the one pursued in the morning; but having to ride over mountains and gullies, one after another, I felt somewhat confused, and finally lost myself altogether. At the same time, however, I knew that the Canu station must have been within four or five miles of me. On nearing a river, as the sun passed below the horizon, I found my horse giving way, and would not be urged on any farther. I knew now that my only alternative would be to stay on the banks of this river till daylight. Quite by chance, I had a box of lucifer matches in my coat pocket (being no smoker, as the majority of the colonists are); otherwise I must have suffered much from cold during the night, the ground being

covered with white frost, while I was not able to stir briskly enough to keep my blood in circulation. I managed, however, to hobble about with my two sticks sufficiently to pick up wood to kindle the fire with. I was obliged to hold the reins of the horse's bridle in my hand all night, otherwise I could not have caught him, and should have been in a very awkward predicament. I did lie down by the side of the fire for a short time, it is true, and probably dozed off for ten minutes during the twelve hours. The night appeared longer than half a dozen usually did; and even if I could have composed my mind, and had been prepared to sleep, yet what with the bullocks bellowing, the wild dogs howling all around me on the sides of the mountains, and the frogs croaking in the river, I could not have slept much. All nature seemed to speak in direful, discordant strains in the desolate solitude of this wilderness.

Gladly did I welcome the dawning twilight of the following morning; and mounting my poor horse (which had fasted nearly as much as myself), I rode him across the river, and at nine o'clock I was cheered by seeing a hut in the distance, which I was not long in discovering was the very one where I had left my man. I then heard from him of the safety of the whole of my horses. I found that the people of the hut had been uneasy about me, as I was expected to return the same evening.

July 20th.—After refreshing my poor horse and myself, we prepared for another trip, in company with a young man, a first-rate horseman, whom I engaged to go with us merely for two days, as my weak leg did not inspire me with much confidence in my horsemanship. I gave this individual forty shillings for the two days, since it would take him another day to return. As soon as the young man had left me, I intended to drive my horses alone, and carry out the idea of teaching them to follow my man, who led the way by riding one, and leading the pack-horse. My leg by this time was gradually gaining strength, and some would have laughed to see me galloping my

horse, and might imagine the sticks strapped to my side were a species of fire-arms. I felt agreeably surprised to find how readily my horses followed the two leading ones, with my bonny Scotchman to attract their attention. In the course of a few days they followed him like lambs, except when descending any declivity, on which occasions they would get before their companions, until reaching level ground, when I had only to ride ahead and keep them together till their leaders drew up.

July 30th.—We reached a Mr. T——'s station this evening, situated on the banks of the Murrumbidgee river. Here there was a nice garden, where they grew most European vegetables. At six o'clock P.M., I dined with the worthy settler, my man taking up his quarters with a Chinese cook, who waited on us at the dinner table, giving me delicious cauliflowers with roast beef, which was sumptuous fare for a bush traveller. The succeeding day proving wet, I accepted an invitation to stay and dine again with this good man. There were no females here at all; and, generally speaking, there are few to be met with in the bush.

August 1st.—Thanking this hospitable man for the reception given me, I took my leave, and drove the horses to a crossing-place three miles down the river. Here we drove them into the water, and swam them across, going on afterwards tolerably well day after day. In a lagoon, a few miles from the river lately crossed, I saw myriads of wild ducks. The noise made when they rose simultaneously from the water, reminded me of the roaring of the waters of the ocean, as they dash their angry waves against the cliffs. I had seen many large flocks before in this country, but nothing comparable with this for size and numbers.

August 6th.—Towards evening I saw a nice-looking station, and meeting with the master close by, he invited me to stay all night, which I gladly accepted. To do the settlers or squatters justice, I am bound to state that they were never known to be backward in hospitality, and were

invariably most kind to strangers. The good man of the house here chatted with me a long time before we retired to rest. He was a magistrate for the district, and seemed highly respectable. He informed me that he had commenced the cultivation of a vineyard: he had a first-rate gardener from the mother country, with whom I conversed, and found him very agreeable and intelligent. The morning following, after breakfast, we prepared for another day's journey. As soon, however, as we mustered the horses, I discovered an increase. One was seen with a foal by its side; and to see the rest of the horses continually running round and smelling of this new-born animal was really quite laughable. Not one pretended either to bite or kick this new-comer, but were huddling around it and its mother throughout the whole day. The close of the day brought us near the river Murray once more, where I gave the foal to a person who kept cows, and who expressed his pleasure at the idea of nursing and rearing it.

After leaving the river Murray, we went on as usual day after day. Of course we had a few obstacles to encounter, which were expected by old travellers; and I now began to class myself among that number, this being the third overland journey I had undertaken since landing from England. I found, wherever we met with crab-holes, (which I described in a former chapter) that the horses gave more than ordinary trouble to drive, as, strange to say, they were particularly fond of running into these boggy places, for the purpose of nibbling off the tops of the rushes, which lifted their heads above the surface of the water. I was forced to exert myself to the utmost, shouting vociferously, and cracking my whip at the same time, to urge them out of these dangerous swamps.

August 16th.—We were in sight of Killeen by the after-part of the day, and, after pitching the tent, I could not rest without first going to see those who had so recently treated me like the good Samaritan of old. On meeting these friends once more, we experienced mutual pleasure,

and I stayed with them till the sun went down, before I turned my horse's head towards my tent. A short distance before reaching it, however, my horse well nigh stuck fast in the bog. I dismounted, and led him through. Not being heavy, like the horse, I did not sink into the mud, otherwise I should have been unable to pull out my lame leg without help. I reached my tent in safety, by coo-o-ing to my man, who, on responding, gave me an idea of the direction in which to steer, and I soon caught sight of his flaming fire.

The next morning we struck our tent, and moved on to the same spot on which I had encamped previous to my accident. I purposed resting my horses a few days, and, consequently, prepared the tent with that idea, making use of the identical poles left there on the unfortunate second of February. The thought of what I had endured since that time seemed like a dream to me; but, alas! it was too painfully true; and whilst pondering over the sleepless nights endured at the hut, the remembrance drew tears from my eyes. During my encampment, I frequently visited my never-to-be-forgotten friends, and gracefully did they proffer any little thing I might need before terminating this tedious journey.

Whilst staying here, my man and I also did what we could towards handling some of the horses, and before my departure I sold three out of the number, which realised one hundred and seventeen pounds, ten shillings, altogether.

August 28th.—This morning we struck the tent, and, after wishing my friends good-bye, we marched onward, passing through the township of Avinal, where I purchased bread at one shilling per pound. Here I saw a medical gentleman, whom I had met previously on the diggings. He resided at this township, having purchased some land near by. I was agreeably surprised to receive an invitation to dine with him in his calico-roofed house. I made off, however, eight miles further the same evening. The following morning eight of my horses could nowhere be found,

neither did I fall in with them the whole of the day ; and being many miles from our camping ground, I accepted the invitation of the overseer at Colonel A——'s station to remain for the night. The owner of this splendid estate resides near the port town. I rode a long distance the next morning, following the course of the river Goulbourn, till I came up to the crossing place, where several houses are built on one side of its banks. This is called Seymour, and here I purchased a loaf of bread to take to my man, knowing that he was getting out of provisions. I carried it under my arm for about ten miles ; but before I made the tent, I met with a person who gave me the intelligence that my horses had been seen near the township of Avinal, eight miles in an opposite direction.

On reaching the tent I found my man absent, and, as I conjectured, in search of the missing animals. However, I made up my mind to ride to the place indicated without delay ; and thinking that the highland laddie would return to the tent hungry in my absence, and not be able to find the bread, I wrote on a slip of paper the following words, placing it on the top of a stick set upright in the tent :—"There is a loaf of bread in the tent. I have heard of the horses. Take care of those in your charge. I expect to be here again at night."

The information given me proved for the most part correct, as I found all the missing horses except one, near the township of Avinal. This one I afterwards found in the bush, in company with several strange horses. Some person had been kind enough to steal the hobbles off its legs. Clapping this one with the other seven, I urged them back to my tent rather quickly, as it was raining fast. As soon as I got back to my tent, my man told me that he had been lost in the bush, and had actually been all the way to Seymour and back ; and, what was worse still, he had lost some of the horses in consequence. Well, thought I, this is certainly trying to the temper ; but in order to mend the matter, I resolved, late as it was, to drive all I could across

the bush, to the station alluded to, knowing that I could put them in a paddock there till the remainder were found. I accordingly mounted a fresh horse, and, at a cost of infinite trouble, kept them facing the proper course, though they were continually turning round to wander to the spot from which I had, but a few hours before, driven a number of them. These wild experiences proved very vexatious, and if my saddle-horse had not been first-rate, it would have been impossible for me to have got the animals to the desired spot. It was dark when I reached my destination, and my face was none the fairer for coming in contact with the branches of trees, whilst galloping my horse, sometimes at a fearful rate, through the bush, to check the vagrant propensities of these unruly animals.

I returned to my man the next morning, and was pleased to see the horses all right near the tent, feeding as quietly as though they cared nothing about the trouble they had given us. The tent being struck, we went to the station I had left a few hours previously, and after selling an unbroken colt for thirty-eight pounds, we marched off again till we reached Seymour, about fifty miles from Melbourne. Here we had no ordinary task to perform, in driving the horses into the river, which took us hours to accomplish. We had great galloping about, and, eventually, were compelled to erect a temporary fence to enclose them in, before they could be induced to take to the water ; but at length, what with cracking of whips and noisy vociferations, we succeeded, and saw them land on the opposite shore in safety. We then put the working horses on the punt, and crossed over ourselves. Safe on the opposite side of the Goulbourn river, I collected my wet horses, and drove them on half a dozen miles more, when I halted near a creek for the night, where we found good grass. As there was abundance of wood at hand, I took the tomahawk, and with it cut off a sheet of bark from a gum tree ; I then put some dough thereon, and in an hour took out from the hot ashes a damper, wherewith to cheer our spirits.

September 3rd.—We passed through Kilmore at noon to-day, and over Pretty Sally's Hill, which is of considerable height, and commands a magnificent view of the surrounding country. Having heard that the Geelong horse-market was preferable to that of Melbourne, I resolved to take my horses there; and rather than go so many miles round by the way of Melbourne to reach it, I chose to cut across the bush in a more direct line. I turned off the main track to the right hand a little after descending Sally's Hill, and encamped for the night near a nice stream of water. Here we slept on the Australian traveller's ordinary bed, made of grass and twigs from the trees, instead of down.

On the second morning after my decision was taken, I rode into Geelong, and went at once to consult an auctioneer about disposing of my horses. The result was, that I concluded to drive the whole into the market on the following Saturday.

September 9th.—Up to this time my horses had not strayed away to any considerable distance since the adventure near Avinal. My man was accustomed to get up once or twice during the night to see whether they were inclined to ramble or not. It so happened in the latter part of the last night in which they were in my possession, that they were missing. Having one always tethered handy in case of any emergency, I immediately rode off in quest of them; and coming up to a soft tract of ground, by the assistance of the full moon I espied foot-marks. I accordingly followed up their track, and fell in with the whole about five miles from my starting-place. I drove them back to the tent rather quicker than they left, I imagine.

As soon as daylight approached, we struck the tent, and marched off into the town, where the greater part of the horses were sold by auction to my satisfaction, and before night the remainder were disposed of privately by myself.

The next day being Sunday, I remained quiet in Geelong; and on the Monday morning, after doing my business, I jumped on board a steam-boat bound for Melbourne, at

which place I left my man with his relations, while I took a passage on board another steamer bound for Sydney, which city I arrived at the third time from Port Victoria, on the morning of the 16th of September, having been graciously preserved by Providence from all harm; while my weak leg had been so much strengthened as to enable me to leave my old friends, the two walking-sticks, behind me.

CHAPTER IX.

RESUMPTION OF BUSH-LIFE—DISAPPOINTMENTS—LOSSES—
AUCTIONEERING—PUBLIC MEETING—VOYAGE TO WOL-
LONGONG—AUCTIONEERING AT DAPTO—NATURAL SCENERY
OF THAT LOCALITY—RETURN TO SYDNEY—BIRD COL-
LECTING—FAREWELL TO PORT JACKSON, ETC., ETC.

As I realised a moderate profit on my last horse speculation, and my leg began to grow much stronger, I resolved to take another, being the fourth, journey overland. I purchased a dray, a tilted cart, and a team of horses, in addition to one to drag along the provision cart, intending to speculate this time by taking into the bush about thirty hundred-weight of merchandise, for the purpose of disposing of it to store-keepers. I hired a man, therefore, and every preparation being made for a trip once more to Port Philip, we started on the twenty-eight of September. The roads were wretchedly dusty. When descending a hill on the second day, one of the horses kicked so violently as to cause his companions in the team to rush to one side of the road, where the dray, coming in contact with a post, was split asunder, while the horses got entangled with the harness.

We continued to progress favourably from day to day. My man being a native (a descendant of English parents), proved of great service to me, as he had been accustomed to bush living and travelling, and was a very excellent manager of horses. Steering for the solitary stores in the

wilderness, I gradually disposed of my merchandise, including dray, cart, and harness. This done, my plan was to invest my capital in horse-flesh, and return to Sydney, knowing that there had been a great fall in the price of horses at Port Victoria since I was there. I therefore rode from one settler's habitation to another, leaving my man in charge of the horses as I purchased them.

We were treated most hospitably during my stay in these parts, which extended to about three weeks. There is but one thing to be regretted by every right-minded person who has made the acquaintance of these good-natured people, and that is intemperance—a vice that ruins the bodies and souls of hundreds. Whilst labouring under the extraordinary excitement produced by spirituous liquors, to which so many are addicted, their slaves and victims act more like madmen than rational beings. I am induced more particularly to remark upon this just at this time, as I saw the terrible evils resulting from the habit during my stay in the locality referred to. I saw a black man and a female in a state of inebriety, with their offspring, a little boy, by their side. This drunken brute, in a paroxysm of passion, dashed his companion on the hard ground with such violence that I expected to hear that all her bones were broken. He then took her on his shoulders and bore her to their dormitory. Thinking that she could not survive such treatment, I prevailed on a person to accompany me with a light to the spot, it being dark. On examining her, however, we were somewhat reassured; and on seeing her the next day, I inquired how she felt, when she replied that her head ached very much. She was very much bruised, and the good people where I was stopping sympathised with her, and were not a little attentive to her for a few days. On chatting with the settler about this barbarous treatment, he informed me that it was of no uncommon occurrence, and stated that their unfortunate skulls could bear much harder blows than those which had fallen on the poor woman.

The influence of this intemperance upon the domestic life of the settlers is very painful. It often converts the husband into either a demon or a maniac. I knew one man, six feet in height, native born, who gave way to intemperance to such an extent as to behave just like a madman. Having transacted business with the man, I saw more of his eccentricities than fell to the lot of many. I have seen him sit by the fire-side for hours together, holding his double-barreled gun between his legs the whole time; and this I have known him to repeat night after night, though for what purpose no one could divine. I saw him jump up suddenly one evening, and rushing out-doors, fire off the gun; and on inquiring of him as to what he fired at, his reply was that he meant to shoot a fine dog of his own, which at other times he highly prized. I deeply sympathised with his wife and children, fearing that something serious might happen to them. A few days after this I saw him again, when he was looking very ill, but he then informed me of his determination to keep sober.

Another time, during my stay in the same district, I was stopping for the night with a settler, a married man, who acted in a most violent manner towards his wife. He had habituated himself to rum drinking for some time; and one evening, while I was at the hut (my man also being with me), he had some altercation with his wife, when to my astonishment he presented a pistol to her breast; whether it was loaded or not I cannot say; however, I had presence of mind to seize his arm, while my man laid hold of him by the collar of his coat. I expostulated with him on his conduct, and brought him to a sense of shame, so that before we retired to rest mutual affection appeared to be re-established between them.

The reader will please to bear in mind that a settler is not a squatter; the latter are, for the most part, highly respectable, and men of large capital; and far be it from me to insinuate that the former are generally such as I have indicated some of them to be.

November 15th.—I rose at daylight, called up my man James, and prepared for the first day's stage towards Sydney. We managed the horses tolerably well after they were all driven off the ground adjacent to their familiar run. This first day we had three men to help us, the labour being very heavy. We travelled nearly thirty miles before camping for the night. The weather had been very dry for several months, which caused the grass to be scanty and the water very scarce in many parts. I began to fear a drought setting in—an opinion shared by many old settlers. This condition of the country was very detrimental to me, as the horses began to fall away, and I almost repented purchasing them.

November 21st.—Early this morning we had a thunderstorm, which caused the waters of the creeks to flow rapidly. On approaching one of no ordinary depth, my saddle-horse stuck fast in the bog. I was obliged to jump off his back into the water up to my waist, which enabled the lightened animal to extricate himself. I directed my man to hasten on the horses to a hut a few miles in front of us, that I might stop there for a few minutes to change my clothes. Whilst doing so, however, my man had the ill-luck to let two of the horses steal away from him, although I had impressed upon his mind the necessity of keeping a sharp lookout upon them. There being little or no grass near, I knew they would ramble if the chance was offered them. James was not even aware of their absence till I mounted for a resumption of our journey, when, riding round and counting them, I found two missing. I requested my man to ride off in quest of them, whilst I kept the others together; but after he had ridden many miles to no purpose, he returned, and I took a spell, without, however, being any more fortunate than he was. I now made up my mind to go on to a station a few miles off, and inquire if I might be allowed to secure my horses in a paddock, whilst looking for the lost ones. This station is called Aurthur's Leigh. The two horses were again sought, but with no

more success. I then resolved to proceed to Sydney without delay, leaving full particulars of my lost animals with the overseer of the place. The proprietor was residing in Sydney, and was a member of the Legislative Council.

November 27th.—I reached within eight miles of Sydney by five o'clock this afternoon; and hearing of a paddock likely to suit, I at once consulted the person who had it to let. I arranged with Mr. S——, not only to turn my horses into the grass, but for him to board and lodge my man and myself for a short time.

The following day I went into Sydney, and was rather disheartened to find the horse-market in a very bad state. In the course of a few days I had some of my horses put up for sale, without, however, selling a single one, as the people generally were afraid to buy during the dry weather. I sold as many privately as I possibly could; but had not disposed of all I wished to part with until the latter end of December.

I was then prevailed on by a Mr. S—— to make yet another trip, hoping to be more fortunate on my next venture. I knew well that merchandise would pay me to take up, and I accordingly resolved to try my luck once more. Much as I longed to see my friends in the land of my birth, I still felt determined to persevere to the utmost, not leaving a stone unturned if I thought there was likely to be a sovereign under it.

January 1st, 1855.—My man James having been discharged a fortnight, I was necessitated to advertise for another person to drive my team of horses. I selected a Frenchman, who could speak good English, and who being accustomed to drive horses, and appearing a powerful man, I thought might serve me well, especially as I knew him to be highly respectable from the unexceptionable references he gave me as to character.

On the second day of the new year we might be seen on the dusty road once more, with as heavy a load as the

horses could get along with. After making about seventy miles on the way, my man wanted to go to the diggings; I consequently paid him off, at the rate of fifteen shillings per week and his rations. This person, I afterwards ascertained, was a French advocate; and, like many more, he went to the Ballarat diggings, where he lost his little money. After that time I saw him in Sydney, wheeling a barrow about. Poor fellow! my sympathy for him induced me to recognise him. He expressed delight at meeting me again, and informed me of his non-success at the diggings which he had visited shortly after leaving my employ.

Servants are very difficult to be had in this country, at least those worthy of the name. I quickly met with another man, who went on tolerably well for a short time, until he fell in with a public-house, where I left him, being disgusted with his conduct.

I was at this time about 150 miles from Sydney, and was brought to a stand on the banks of a river, with the water so high that I could not pass over. Here I was all alone, my horses tired, and, what was still worse, with scarcely any grass for them to eat, and with very little food for myself either, and with no place where I could purchase any, nearer than Goulbourn, a distance of twenty-two miles. This was rather an awkward predicament to be placed in, though one which I should have cared little about, but for the horses, which were every day growing weaker. I was here from Saturday, the twentieth of January, until the following Tuesday, before a person came to relieve me. I had previously seen a young man, and by him dispatched a message to a person who I knew would send along his team of horses to draw my load, which my poor half-starved horses were quite unable to do. I also had eaten my last crust of bread the morning I welcomed the sight of the man and horses approaching to my relief. One of my horses had laid down twice from weakness. I gave him some oatmeal gruel, and so got the poor beast upon its legs again

for a time ; but there being no food to keep him on all-fours, it proved useless, and before we crossed the river, he had sunk again upon the bank of the river. I therefore left two behind, taking another as far as the person's hut, which was thirteen miles distant, where I stopped for the night.

The following day I procured another horse, in order to ride back to the river; for the reader must understand that the faithful animal that had borne me to the hut the previous evening had died, and I had the painful duty of burning its inanimate body. I certainly shed tears over it; but as the law of the land requires dead animals to be burned, I performed the unpleasant task. Had I not done so, it would soon have proved a nuisance to the people of the hut, the weather being very hot at the time. After this duty was over, I rode back to the river, and soon caught sight of the weakest horse, which had fallen into the river, probably in the attempt to get upon its legs. The third one I sold for five pounds, though it had cost me twelve in its rough state, before it had been broken in to harness at all. So there was an end of three of my unfortunate beasts; and shortly after this I learned, to my sorrow, that two others, which I had left behind, thinking to take them back with me this journey, were no more. One, I believe, died through shortness of grass, and the other died soon after foaling. These certainly were trials, though my strength of mind, happily, was equal to them.

After I returned to the hut where my dray and property had been left, I engaged with a person to go with me as far as the Fish River, beyond a place called Narrawa, where there is a public-house and a store. Arrived there, I settled with this good man, and sent him off home, he being busy about this time, thrashing out wheat. My dray was next taken charge of by a good-natured settler, of whom I had previously purchased horses, and who would not hear of receiving anything for his services. This was

a pleasing example of gratitude; he had not forgotten my lending him a couple of horses and my man, to draw a load of bacon to the Burrawa township, to be reloaded with stores, which he took back to the station.

I had been on this journey much longer than usual, not only in consequence of losing my horses, but through meeting with a rogue, who swindled me out of some little property, and told a hundred lies into the bargain. I had not less than a hundred miles to ride, through a romantic country, very thinly populated, before I could find a magistrate; and after returning from my search the rascal could not be laid hold of. I was invited to stay at a widow lady's house as long as I pleased, whilst engaged in this business. This good lady had two daughters and one son at home; she kept a goodly number of workmen, and had a first-rate farm, renting many acres of government land, with numerous cattle, horses, and sheep running thereon. There was a nice garden here, and as there happened to be a gentleman staying with us at the time, we each of us took a spade one day, and dug up a large piece of ground before the sun went down. The person alluded to appeared to pay the lady of the house very polite attention.

One day, previous to returning to the port town, understanding that Mrs. C—— wished to ride across the bush about fifteen miles, to see a person on business matters, I offered to accompany her, which offer she readily accepted. The day proved very hot, and the journey took us the greater part of the day to perform. I had a nice horse to ride, and the lady rode a beautiful pony, one she had been in the habit of riding for years. She proved a good horsewoman, an accomplishment that is very general in Australia, as the females delight to gallop their horses across the bush to their neighbour's; and if it be many miles, they appear to enjoy it the more, and are not the least timid when they have become acquainted with the surrounding country. The parts we traversed during this journey looked in a deplorable condition; the grass was

either parched up, or in other places you could see distinctly where the fiery element had swept it clean from the ground.

On the fifteenth of March I mounted one of the five horses I had then in my possession, and led the remaining four abreast, wherever the nature of the country allowed of it. These animals I had been partly necessitated to take instead of money, there being a great deal of business done in bartering at times. I should have much preferred their value in gold just at that time, the food for them being so scarce.

How many times have I thought over the particulars of this adventurous trip in the wilds of Australia; and notwithstanding the trials and difficulties I was compelled to encounter, I have yet great cause for thankfulness to feel my body stronger than when I stepped on board the vessel that wafted me to these shores, and to know that I have enjoyed much better health than I had done for years previously.

March 20th.—This morning I made off from my camping ground, and reached Paddy's river in the after-part of the day, where I saw a young man sitting on the ground, taking some tea. I turned out my horses under the mountain close by, and then crossed the river to chat with this stranger. I soon discovered, from his manner and conversation, that he was no blackguard. He had been to the diggings, where he had had no luck, and he had then only half a crown in his pocket to take him upwards of a hundred miles, to Sydney. I gave him some food, and we conversed together till resting time. I offered him a ride on one of my horses the following morning, which he gladly accepted.

The day and night previous to reaching my lodgings, at Mr. S——'s, eight miles from Sydney, it rained very much, so that we got very wet. On making everything as comfortable as the peculiarity of our circumstances admitted of, however, we proceeded along the road, although very slowly, in consequence of its bad condition after the heavy fall of rain. I reached the desired place on the twenty-fifth

of March ; and after the young man who accompanied me had rested and partaken of food, he went on towards the city, to discover a brother, whose address he had previously given me.

On my arrival, Mr. S—— and I had a chat about this tedious and unfortunate journey of mine, and gladly did he and his wife welcome me back once more, as they had been thinking anxiously about me. They had both begun to think that I was dead, and never expected to see me again, as they had read in a Sydney paper of the bones of some human being having been found in the bush near the district I had so lately visited. They were therefore the more pleased to see me ; indeed, to use their own words, it seemed to them as though my dead body had come to life again. I felt particularly pleased with their kind behaviour to me.

On the day after reaching this spot I went into Sydney, determined to make some purchases, and to go once more towards the Lachlan river. While in the city, who should I meet with but a young gentleman who came out with me from England, with the idea of going to the gold mines. The reader will probably recollect that two out of the number of those intending to go, tarried behind in Sydney, one of whom went to New Zealand, while the other, whom I met at this time, had been for a season in the mounted police, but had retired from that occupation, and was now anxious for me to employ him at the low wages of ten shillings per week, including rations. I felt pleased to take him with me, knowing that he was respectable. This unexpected meeting prevented me advertising for a man, and allowed of my marching to the interior without much delay. I was sorry to find that he was so destitute of money as to request the small sum of ten shillings to be advanced him before going to his journey, in order to purchase a pair of strong boots. I felt quite satisfied that his empty pockets did not arise from intemperance, or any kind of excesses, but solely from living in town, subject to heavy expenses, without having been able to obtain remunerative

employment. He also solicited me to advance him sufficient money to pay his passage to England in company with myself, whenever I should make up my mind to go; this I partly promised him, although he flattered himself that his friends would remit him a hundred pounds through the bank from England for that very purpose.

April 10th.—At half-past five this morning I called up my new man; and having caught and fed the horses, and broken our fast, we set out about nine o'clock. The roads were tolerably good, although heavy rains had fallen a few days previously. We managed to get on very comfortably, and descended the famous Razor mountain very well, by lashing on a sapling to each wheel, so as to impede its progress. This is the substitute, in bush travelling, for the iron drags used in the mother country. After proceeding a few miles beyond Catherine's hill, and about eighty miles from Sydney, I was advised to turn off the main track into the original road, that had been almost superseded. I had not advanced more than three miles, however, before my horses were stopped by a fearful-looking road, running up a very steep mountain, called the Mittagang range. Here we were forced to take off half the load, leaving it in the bush, whilst we went to the top with the other half, and, putting that down, we returned for the remainder. All things being in order once more, we travelled onward without any further obstruction, until we reached a mountain about twenty-three miles from the Fish river. Here we had to go through the same process as that just described. In all these difficulties, I laboured twice as hard as my young man, and often lay down at night as tired as a dog.

The weather had favoured us for the greater part of the journey; there were, however, exceptions to this. One night in particular I remember camping out, when both of us were wet through to the skin; and everything besides being wet, we had much trouble to light our fire, and but for our perseverance in puffing away with the bush bellows (our hats) for an hour, we should have been compelled to go

without supper. We succeeded at length in making tea, and also in partially drying our garments; yet the rain continued to pour down so heavily as to cause the water to run under us. We cut down branches of trees, and spread them on the ground under our bedding, so that the stream might pass under without immersing us.

June 1st.—Up to this time our wayfaring experiences had been such as are usual in this country; one day, one minor annoyance; and another, a more important series of vexations or misfortunes. One day a horse, unhooked from his fellow, would make a bolt and gallop away, with the harness dangling about his heels, thereby cutting his hinder parts dreadfully. Another time the shaft horse would slip down on the ground, causing no little amount of labour to get him up again. Anon an unfortunate animal has stuck in the bog, and a person, passing at the time, being solicited to assist, would make some paltry excuse and walk away; expecting, no doubt, that the dray would be left whilst we went to seek assistance, when he, vulture-like, would pounce upon his prey, and seize the opportunity of carrying off some valuable booty.

This morning I was forced to rise prematurely by the biting of ants, near a nest of which it appeared we had been friendly enough to take our night's lodging. After breakfasting we went into the Burrawa township, passing over a river bearing that name. This is a beautiful site for a town, as it is situated on an extensive level track of land, having magnificent mountain scenery in the back-ground, and abundance of water in the adjacent river, besides which, wells have been sunk, which yield good water at an inconsiderable depth. There is one mountain shaped very much like the sugar-loaf. I remarked to my companion, on viewing it from our camping ground, that I thought the day was very far distant when the inhabitants would be seen flocking thither on pleasure excursions, as is the custom in the more distant suburbs of London. What renders this spot still more desirable as a site for a town, is the fact of

there being so many settlers and squatters residing around in every direction, which must eventually cause much business to be transacted there. Indeed, it is already wonderful to see what large quantities of merchandise are sent from the port-town every month, or, I may say, every week, although the population of the township itself is but insignificant.

I found the majority of the inhabitants of this district to be of the Roman Catholic persuasion, and there is a chapel being erected in stone.

I had the good fortune to get through my business, selling my merchandise, the dray and harness, and took some horses once more in exchange from one person.

June 26th.—After settling with my young man, he accompanied me to Sydney, in order to learn the state of the horse-market. Previous to doing my own business, however, I went with him to the post-office, where he found a letter from his father, containing a bank draft for one hundred pounds, to enable him to return to England without delay. I accompanied him to the bank, to testify to the cashier that he was the identical person named in the letter of advice from England. I happened to be known to this banking official previously to my leaving the mother country, having transacted business with him for some years in London. No sooner, however, had this young man got possession of the sum remitted by his father, for the express purpose of enabling him to return home, than he joined a person of his acquaintance, and taking leave of me, they both started off to the Hanging-rock diggings, leaving word at their lodgings that they might be expected back by the latter end of the year. This conduct I thought was very ungrateful and censurable, and a young man who could thus act was not worthy either of help or pity when in difficulty.

Before leaving the city, to return to my lodgings, I made myself acquainted with all needful particulars relative to the price of horses, which were then selling low. I was

determined, however, rather than sacrifice them there, to take them back about eighty miles into the bush, where I knew I could dispose of them amongst the settlers to greater advantage. I conversed with my friend Mr. S— upon the subject, and also broached to him another idea which I had been for some time revolving in my mind, feeling assured of his cordial sympathy and advice in reference to any matter affecting my welfare. This idea, then, the reader must understand, was to apply to the proper authorities in the city for a general auctioneer's licence. He warmly approved the purpose. I had no trouble in procuring it, on showing them the names of those who supported me in the application. The cost of a licence was fifteen pounds per annum; but as I only wanted to take out mine for the half-year, commencing from the first of July, I had only to pay half that amount.

Having decided to try my tongue at auctioneering, I thought it best to commence with the sale of my own property. Having a team of working horses as well as saddle ones, I thought it prudent to hire a man, and purchase another dray, harness, etc., and sufficient merchandise to load the same with, so as to make a good day's work of it. The next thing was to give proper publicity as to the day, the place of sale, and the kind of goods for disposal. I therefore had two hundred hand-bills and posters printed for the occasion; and after maturing my plans, I took leave of my friend Mr. S—, and started off in company with my new hand. I found my horses act admirably with a heavy load; and on reaching a place called Bong Bong, where there is a very nice inn, situated on the original bush road, and central to the principal settlers and the scattered population in the district, I resolved to begin the exercise of my novel functions here. I found the innkeeper a very intelligent and remarkably civil person, who made me comfortable, and rendered me considerable assistance in mustering all the buyers he possibly could. My bills were soon circulated for many miles around, and in the meantime,

with my man's assistance, I fitted up a large room for the occasion.

July 28th.—This being my first attempt to appear before the public as an auctioneer, I felt somewhat diffident at first. However, my man having got all the horses into the yard adjacent to the inn, and a goodly number of people having come together for business, I mustered up courage to mount the rostrum prepared for me, not forgetting to place in a conspicuous part of the room the name of the licensed auctioneer. I was resolved, if possible, not to disgrace the profession. My trembling tongue at first almost refused to perform its office; it warmed, however, with its motion, until at length I knew not how to stop. I was greeted from time to time with good-humoured shouts of laughter and humorous sallies. But notwithstanding the few jocose remarks that were made, my friends complimented me on my decided success, and expressed a wish that I should visit them again in the course of a month. I sold my saddle horse, and also the team, dray, and harness, subject to certain conditions. The sale lasted from twelve o'clock at noon until nine at night, with scarcely any cessation, except a few minutes' interval to allow of my taking a hurried cup of tea. Knowing my man to be respectable, I found him very useful on the occasion, although I acted as clerk for myself. A little before midnight we had delivered the purchasers' goods, and received all monies, except for a small parcel sold to a Mr. Morricy, whom I knew by having formerly sold him a horse.

The following day being Sunday, I rested myself, being very tired from having stood on my weak leg so many hours. Up to Tuesday, Mr. Morricy had not sent the amount of his bill. However, not feeling disposed to waste more time, I left my account with the host, and set off for Sydney once more, armed with a revolver to guard my property.

August 3rd.—By this date we had come within a day's journey of Mr. S——'s dwelling, without anything remark-

able having occurred. On lying down at night, I told my man it was my intention to rise early on the following morning so as to reach our destination in good time. I awoke, therefore, as early as one o'clock, which has often happened to me when I have gone to bed impressed with a fixed intention. At that early hour I called up my man, and after partaking of refreshments, the horses were put in order, and by half-past two o'clock of the same morning I roused up the toll-keeper at the last gate beyond the city. When this good man had received payment of the toll, and my horses were out of the way of the gate, he kindly called me aside and told me that there were two bush-rangers near at hand, who had already committed several robberies on the road within a short distance from that spot, and had been seen only two nights previously within half a mile of the gate. I had invariably found this worthy man remarkably civil, and as I had passed through the gate so many times, our faces had become quite familiar to each other. This circumstance induced him to give me this friendly information, thinking that I might chance to have property in cash of considerably value about my person, in which conjecture he was not mistaken. Taking my revolver in hand, and seeing that the percussion-caps were all in proper condition, I wished the gatekeeper good morning.

It was now for me to brace up my courage, and do my best in case of an attack. I requested my man to walk and lead the front horse, keeping a sharp look-out on either side of the road, and the moment he saw any person approaching us, to inform me instantly of the fact. I walked in front of all for the greater part of the time, carrying my weapon in my hand until daylight. The moon meanwhile gave a good light, which rendered it more pleasant. I worked my optics uncommonly hard, looking all round momentarily, being fully determined not to allow any one to approach near. Daylight dawned about the time we reached another toll-gate, within seven or eight miles of my lodgings. I now put my revolver out of sight, and made

inquiries about these desperadoes. I learnt that they had lately fired at two men as they were riding along in a light cart. The bullet, it appears, struck the harness on the horse's collar, without any injury whatever being done. The toll-keeper also informed me that he had certainly seen the two fellows pass that way, and described them as being fine looking men, possessing peculiar features.

As we reached our destination by noon, I had some time to rest before night, and after the excitement of the morning it certainly proved very acceptable. I now allowed my man to visit his friends for a few days, whilst I transacted my business in the city, instructing him what time his services would be again required.

I bustled about on the third day after reaching Mr. S——'s, and went into Sydney for a few days to make my purchases. I proposed taking as much property with me as the horses could drag along the road, and to have two days' sale instead of one. I ordered my bills to that effect, and sent them forward by the mail cart, so that the innkeeper might circulate them without delay. I began to feel anxious to do as much business as possible in a short space of time, in order to return to my native land almost immediately. My determination to economize time will be apparent, when I state that my next sale was fixed to take place on the 23rd of August; while it was the thirteenth of the month by the time I had completed my purchases, packed my goods, and was ready to start once more for the bush.

On the Saturday previous to my taking leave of Mr. S——, he informed me that he had issued a notice to the effect that a public meeting would be held at the village of St. Anns, a mile from his house, that very evening, for the purpose of soliciting the authorities to establish two police in that locality, there being no constable stationed for fourteen miles along the road; and hearing of the bush-rangers that were just at that time infesting the roads, the public were more than usually interested in the matter. He

solicited me to accompany him to the rendezvous; and having done my work ready to start into the bush on the Monday following, I readily consented to go. As soon as the appointed hour was come, to my surprise, I was requested to take the chair, having been known by several persons present for ten months previously. I responded to their wishes, notwithstanding the unexpected nature of the duty, though I did it reluctantly. After making a few brief remarks, suitable resolutions were put to the meeting, and carried unanimously. The business being over, I had the pleasure of receiving the united thanks of the company. Before I returned from this bush journey, the inhabitants had already got one constable stationed near them, as the result of this meeting.

Our trials were very great before we reached Bong Bong. One day the shaft-horse fell in the road with the dray, and another night he slipped into a water-hole, with every chance of being drowned; indeed, I should certainly have lost this fine grey horse, but for the seasonable help of a tall powerful man living near. I was just in the act of lying down, when I heard a splash in the water, the accident happening near our camping-ground. I immediately ran for assistance, and by our combined efforts we rescued the poor beast from a watery grave. The following day I anticipated reaching my destination, the Royal Oak; but the shaft-horse being weak, caused by his plunging about so much in the mud at the bottom of the said water-hole, I was necessitated to hire a bullock team to assist. However, after several narrow escapes from breaking this shaft-horse's neck—and my own too—we reached the desired spot by the midnight following, the eighteenth day of August. It being Saturday, I felt doubly anxious to rest there on the Sunday rather than remain behind.

The good people were in bed when we reached the house, but they quickly got up, and welcoming us with smiles, assisted to make everything safe for the night. After the horses were secured in the paddock, where there was good

grass and water, we partook of refreshments and retired to rest.

Previous to the sale, I arranged with a Mr. D——, a schoolmaster in the bush, to act as clerk for me on the occasion. I also contrived to have a place fitted up outside the house for the better accommodation of the expected company, while I was enabled to take my stand under the verandah. The first day's sale came off on the 23rd of August, when I had a very fair sprinkling of attendants of both sexes. At noon I announced the commencement by reading over the conditions. I continued to sell until about six o'clock, at which hour I sold the last lot for the day. My clerk, my man, and myself were hard at work until ten o'clock at night in settling the matters connected with the day's sale.

August 24th.—The sale began as usual to-day, but ended without my disposing of the whole of my property. I declined selling after six o'clock, as I clearly saw that the remainder could not be disposed of without taking another day, and giving notice to that effect. Accordingly, previous to concluding my sale to-day, I gave my customers to understand that I had yet a great number of goods, and urged them to visit me again, in company with such of their friends as they chose to bring with them.

The next day I was agreeably surprised to see so many of my friends arrive, the number increasing as the day advanced. I commenced selling about one o'clock, and continued pushing off whatever I could until ten at night; but finding there was no chance of clearing out, I thanked my customers for their attendance, and concluded the heavy labours of the day.

The following day being Sunday, I spent a short time with a clergyman, who is in the habit of calling here to breakfast, and to rest his horse, whilst on his way to preach to a congregation about seven miles from this place. The whole family and I joined with this man of God in praise to Him who is the giver of every good and perfect gift.

Oh! what a comfort to hear from his lips the kind petitions on my behalf, which I have attempted thus feebly to embalm in verse :—

THE STRANGER'S PRAYER.

Grant, gracious God ! thy grace to all,
In this our day, in this our need ;
And never let thy servant fall !
Such blessings, Lord, for one I plead.

Look down on him with bended knee ;
Protect his soul from ev'ry harm ;
And whilst he's wafted o'er the sea,
His spirit free from false alarm.

Cause him to trust in thy great name ;
When firm in thee, he thus will rest,
And tempest-toss'd he can proclaim,
“My God this soul of mine hath blest.”

Spirit divine, protect that soul ;
Guide him with speed to his own land,
Keeping his members sound and whole,
Until he clasp the kindred hand.

After uttering these and similar kind invocations, this man of God went on his way rejoicing, to preach the gospel of peace.

The following day I rode to see Mr. Morrice, to wit, the man who owed me the sum of four pounds eleven shillings. I disliked the idea of letting him go free ; having heard a bad character of him, I felt determined to seek for redress, as he would not settle this small bill. I rode to consult with a magistrate four miles distant, as there was to be a sitting of his colleagues in concert with him to take place within a few days from that time. This gentleman granted me a summons for the debtor in question, not only for the original debt, but also for an additional charge which I claimed for loss of time and consequent expense. The

aggregate sum now amounted to nearly fourteen pounds; however, before the day for the hearing of the case came on, Morricy applied for a compromise, when I consented to take eight pounds, and go about my business. Such was the result of this man's roguery.

I felt now quite at liberty to return, first to the port town, and from thence to England, without delay. I therefore settled with my man, and procured him a ride back to Sydney in company with a drayman; and then, taking a seat on the mail coach, after pushing my way through the bush half a dozen miles, with carpet bag in hand and my revolver-companion about my person, I soon made off for Mr. S——'s once more. The mail coach, as used in the bush of Australia, is built upon a similar principle to the vehicles known as "breaks" in England. They can carry about twelve passengers, independent of the letter-bags. It is not the easiest mode of riding that I have experienced, in consequence of the unevenness of the roads; and very often, in going long distances, passengers are compelled to get down and walk for miles at a stretch when the roads are mountainous, although four strong horses are used, which are changed for fresh ones at certain convenient stages. Nervous people are generally timid at being tossed and shaken about so much, or else I should strongly recommend those labouring under such complaints to try the experiment, as it communicates a shock very similar to electricity, and the dose being repeated so many times, and all for the same charge, it might prove economical medicine.

It was early on the fifth day of September—a lovely morning—when I alighted from this vehicle. With carpet bag in hand, I quickly reached the dwelling of my worthy friend Mr. S——. I soon aroused the inmates, and partook of breakfast, being in want of some refreshment, after travelling the principal part of the night. At ten o'clock of the same day I went to the city, in company with Mr. S——, who kindly drove me in his horse and gig. I repaired at once to the Circular Quay, to see what vessels

were bound to London; and after seeing them all, and ascertaining all particulars relative to them, I returned to the village of Enfield with my friend.

I visited Sydney again on the second day after, when I decided to undertake my homeward voyage in the brig A——, Captain G—— commander. As the vessel, though advertised to sail almost immediately, I learnt, on inquiry, was not likely to leave for some considerable period, I found that even after I had made all requisite preparations, there would still be time upon my hands. I accordingly resolved to treat myself to a visit to the Illawarra district, about forty miles from the heads of Port Jackson. My friend Mr. S—— knew this charming region well, and gave me such a glowing account of the beauties of nature in the locality, that I thought I could perhaps combine business with pleasure. Accordingly, as I possessed a general auctioneer's license, I purchased a few lots of merchandise suitable for the bush, and putting it on board a steamer on the following Saturday, I soon lost sight of the city once more. The day proved rainy, and the wind blew so fearfully, that after knocking about all day, and getting opposite the desired place, we could not be landed, and were actually necessitated to run back to Sydney again, which we reached by one o'clock on Sunday morning. All the passengers in the cabin were afflicted with sea-sickness, and remained on board till daylight appeared. I had to wait until the Tuesday following, when we had pleasant weather, and were landed at Wollongong about two o'clock in the afternoon of that day.

From the instructions given me by my friend Mr. S——, I had about seven miles to pass over from the sea-side, before reaching the Illawarra hotel, kept by a Mr. Brown, situated in a district called Dapto. I hired a cart from a small wharf where my goods had been landed, and passing through Wollongong, reached my destination just before the sun sank behind the picturesque mountains in the background. Here I found everything quite as comfortable as

I could reasonably expect; and after explaining my errand to the host, he informed me that there were numbers of settlers who were likely to attend my sale.

The next morning I mounted one of Mr. Brown's horses, and rode to a great distance to circulate my bills, which task I had finished by the following day, having been promised by the major part of those whom I had seen that they would attend my sale.

On the twenty-first of September I mounted the rostrum once more, under a verandah in front of the hotel. I began about noon, and ended my sale at about five o'clock P.M., by which time I had sold everything, except some watches and a few other small articles which I could put in my carpet-bag. Now, thought I to myself, all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. I therefore determined, on the following morning, to indulge myself to a favourite recreation, in company with the son of a settler, whom I appointed to meet at his house. This was nothing less than climbing the mountains, with a gun in my hand, for the purpose of hunting the bounding kangaroo. Mr. Brown was so considerate as to speak with three black men, and send them forward to hunt out and to carry our game for us. I was much pleased with this arrangement, and gladly did I avail myself of this opportunity for field sport, as I had not before spared a day for such a purpose.

Although it was far from being a cleanly sight, I was amused to see the way in which these aborigines cooked a small species of kangaroo. Without cleaning it, inside or outside, they roasted it, and then tore it to pieces with their teeth and hands. They expressed great delight in handing me a choice morsel, after making known to them my wishes through an interpreter. It was only for the sake of ascertaining the taste of this peculiar animal that I was tempted to take a small piece of the haunch. The primitive mode of dressing it did not recommend it to my squeamish appetite; yet I am bound to state that the flesh is delicious,

and if properly cleaned, I, for one, could have made a hearty meal off it.

I remained in this locality until the third day after my sale, and enjoyed a trip down the creek to the lake, in a boat of Mr. Brown's, accompanied by him and two of his workmen, who managed the boat for us. We took a small basket of creature comforts with us, and a double-barreled gun, with which Mr. B. shot a duck. I had the luck also to shoot a fine hawk, which I carried back to Sydney, where I had it preserved and stuffed.

Whilst staying in this neighbourhood, I had an opportunity of observing a few of the beauties of this favoured district. I will, therefore, jot down, as I pass on, a few of the objects and sights which struck me most forcibly at the time. During my ascent of the mountain chain on the day of my shooting excursion, I gained an impressive view of the Illawarra lake and the Pacific ocean beyond it. I was very greatly impressed with the grandeur of this scenery. The vegetation that clothed the steep sides and dells of this lofty region was of a character distinct from any I had hitherto witnessed. The plants and trees were altogether of a different species from those I had seen in other districts. Here, for the first time in my life, I gazed with admiration upon the graceful-looking cabbage-palm. This tree has a very tropical appearance, towering with its lofty heads and slender, branchless trunks, at times to the height of 80 feet. Here, too, the herbage is so interlaced with ferns and vines as to render some parts quite impassable. The lyre-bird frequents this region, but is remarkably shy in its habits. At the foot of this mountain range is seen one of the richest and most beautiful tracks of land probably that exist in New South Wales. Nearly the whole of the available land is either used for agricultural purposes, or is fenced in as meadows are in the mother country, where there are many cows kept, producing the best butter in the colony. It is called Wollongong butter, deriving that appellation from the name of the port town from which it is sent by trading

vessels to the city of Sydney, where it commands a higher market price than any other sort.

This English-like portion of Australia is peculiarly favoured with excellent streams of water and general moisture, in consequence of which the grass appears green throughout the greater part of the year. The mountain chain, like a huge wall, shelters it from the hot parching northerly winds on the one hand, while on the other it is open to the cooling breezes of the ocean. The mountains attract and condense the clouds, so that the fertilizing showers of rain fall on the levels below, and produce the most beneficial results.

The worthy host at the Illawarra hotel kindly accompanied me with his horse and gig on my return to Wollongong, to take steamer to Sydney; and whenever the nature of the roads admitted him, his horse trotted along famously. We had a splendid view of Mount Keri, the highest point of which is 1530 feet above the level of the sea. There are several coal seams opened about two-thirds of the way up, which are yielding coals of no mean quality. I took my leave of Mr. B—— at the steamer, and reached the landing place in Sydney at nine o'clock P.M., when I quickly retired to rest.

September 25th.—The following morning I walked to see the agents of my vessel, with whom I had deposited half my passage-money; and found to my surprise there was no chance of sailing for London for several weeks, as they had been disappointed about some wool, which was to have formed part of the cargo. The idea then struck me of making a collection of some of the beautiful-plumaged birds of Australia. I had already a white cockatoo alive and an opossum, which I purchased of a person in Sydney for twenty shillings, including a cage, which the man and woman both informed me cost them all the money. Not long after my purchase, this fair but frail one actually came to my lodgings, and watched for an opportunity to steal it, and she really did carry it off without my knowledge.

Upon missing the opossum, however, Mr. S—— suspected her; and on the ground of this suspicion, I got a policeman to go in one direction, whilst I ran across the bush in another towards the Paramatta road. I was determined not to be beaten, if possible, in this petty pilfering scheme of hers, or at least not to let her slip through my fingers for lack of exertion on my part. Luckily, I overtook her just as she got on the Paramatta road, and fortune so favoured me that the police came up within ten minutes after stopping the thief, when I gave her in charge. She had not taken my cage with her, being too great an adept to do so, but had fetched one all the way from the city to suit her own purposes. I appeared against her on the following morning; and on account of my valuing the animal at a shilling only, she was leniently sentenced to twenty-four hours' imprisonment, in addition to about twenty which she had already undergone. I certainly should have got the lady a greater punishment had I not feared that the case might be sent to the sessions to be tried, which induced me to urge the magistrates to deal with her summarily, as it would have been very annoying to have forfeited my passage on that account.

I afterwards took up my quarters at Mr. S——'s, until I stepped on board my vessel. During my stay, however, I laboured earnestly, shooting and preserving every variety of bird I could find, so that before leaving the shores of Australia I had no less than a hundred and fifteen specimens of the brilliant-plumaged birds of that great country, and about a hundred varieties out of the number.

My luggage all being on board the brig A——, I anticipated leaving Port Jackson many days and weeks before the event actually came off, which was of consequence to me, having been away from home so long; but finding that there was no blame chargeable upon the captain or agents, I bore the inconvenience with more patience on that account. The vessel, however, was at length advertised

to sail positively on the seventh of November. After posting my letters for England, and taking leave of all my friends, except one, who accompanied me, I went on board, and the vessel left the wharf on the afternoon of the day announced, and let go the anchor for the night off Pinch-gut Island, a barren rock in the harbour of Port Jackson.

CHAPTER X.

THE VOYAGE HOME.

November 8th.—My friend, Mr. L——, who accompanied me on board yesterday, was kindly invited by the captain to remain all night, and go ashore in the pilot's boat as soon as we got out of the harbour. At eight o'clock this morning the pilot came on board, according to appointment, the wind being light at the time. At nine o'clock the anchor was weighed, and our gallant little vessel glided slowly down this magnificent harbour, making several tacks before we cleared the heads of Port Jackson. The pilot now jumped into his boat, and went on board another vessel near by, which had been hove-to early in the morning, for the purpose of allowing the captain to get his quadrant repaired. The pilot informed us she was bound for China. I now also parted with my worthy friend, who accompanied the pilot. Although our acquaintance had been but comparatively short, yet our hearts were strongly attached to each other.

We had not long been at sea before the wind blew strong, the motion of the vessel causing several to experience sea sickness, which unpleasantness lasted several days. On the day following our leaving the port, the sailors were to be seen busying themselves in stowing away the anchors on the rail and the chains below, thereby rendering all snug for a long voyage.

November 12th.—In the after-part of this day the wind

veered to the eastward, with a hard squall, which compelled us to lay-to under a close-reefed main-topsail. At midnight the vessel laboured heavily, whilst every attention was paid to the pumps, etc. Nothing particular now claimed my attention for several days, as we met with variable winds and occasional passing showers, which are general in these latitudes.

November 21st.—Towards the close of day the captain kept a sharp look-out for the Three Kings, islands situated on the extreme north-western coast of New Zealand. We sighted one some miles distant from our weather-beam after dark, but it was soon lost sight of. I rested quite easy, however, as our worthy commander appeared at all times exceedingly careful.

November 25th.—We this day passed out of eastern longitude into western, and it happening on Sunday, the day following was likewise reckoned as Sunday, and the twenty-fifth day also, so as to correspond with Greenwich time. Thus we seemed to be the gainers of a day.

Nothing particular occurred for several days, except such variations in the weather as are to be expected in these latitudes.

December 17th.—The wind blew strong early this morning, and by eleven o'clock it increased to a violent gale, when the vessel was hove to for a few hours under close-reefed main-topsail, rolling fearfully meanwhile with a high sea. The sight was awfully grand, and to some it would have been alarming; but to me it only seemed a repetition of what I had often witnessed. The wind moderated towards evening, which enabled the vessel to run before it.

December 19th.—At six o'clock in the evening we caught sight of four icebergs. One of the number appeared very large, while the other three were of inconsiderable size. The vessel passed them all on the leeward side, half the number being a few miles to windward of the remainder. It was truly a fine sight, and one not easily forgotten by those who stood on the vessel's deck and gazed upon these

grand objects until they receded from our view. Our worthy captain informed me that he did not expect to find icebergs so far east by north at that season of the year as those alluded to, and had it happened in the darkness of the night, they might have exposed the vessel to considerable danger.

December 23rd.—Whilst running under close-reefed topsails, at half-past seven o'clock in the evening, we saw another iceberg, passing it about a mile and a half to the leeward. At one extremity on its summit there was an elevation resembling a martello tower. This was much larger than those previously seen, and was supposed to rise several hundred feet above the surface of the water.

December 25th.—This Christmas day was the second I had spent on the ocean and the fourth away from home. The remembrance of my preservation amidst so many perils induced me to reflect seriously on the past, and to praise that gracious Father who is the giver of every good and perfect gift.

THOUGHTS ON TIME AND THE WATCH-BELL.

Oh time! thou ramblest far
At sea, as on the land;
Thou'rt like the shooting star,
And never waits for man.

From four till six at eve
The dog-watch they begin,
And then at eight relieve
Those that are turned in.

As I lay on my bed,
The night-watch strikes out four.
'Tis ten; I turn my head,
And shake my pillow o'er.

Now twelve o'clock is come,
Eight sounds are struck from bell;
The sailor's work is done,
Whilst others take a spell.

The middle watch I know,
When near at four o'clock,
On land is heard to crow
The lordly farm-house cock.

At four the noisy bell
Awakes all hands from sleep ;
But landsmen cannot tell
If sailors laugh or weep.

The time will ere long come,
When on the land we get,
To clasp the friends at home,
Whom we've for years not met.

It's time that does it all,
That greatest innovator ;
In honour or in fall
It soothes or proves tormentor.

Time waiteth not for kings ;
Here mortals cannot stay ;
And for the wisest things
'Tis always on its way.

Then let us now improve
The season at command ;
The passing moments move
To work with earnest hand.

December 29th.—Early this morning we were visited by the south wind, which in this latitude is chilled by wandering over the vast expanse of ocean intervening between us and the dreary regions of the Antarctic pole. After a while it increased in strength, and at times during the day we were visited with squalls and passing showers of rain. The lucent sky of New Holland was here changed for cloudy days, thereby rendering the use of the quadrant difficult and embarrassing. The perpetual surges tossed our little barque about like a thing of nought on the bosom of the ocean. At five o'clock P.M., we passed the meridian of Cape Horn

in latitude 56°, 49' s., being at the time only fifty-one miles from its extreme southernly rocky island.

ON DOUBLING CAPE HORN.

Now, gentle breeze, with safety bear
Our goodly vessel round the Horn,
And grant us thy protection there
From rocks and shoals that frown and warn.

And waft us towards our native shore
Fast as thy wings of speed can bear,
That we may mingle as of yore
With loved ones who await us there.

Our harps from willows we'll take down,
And strike the grateful, joyous lay;
We'll deck our heads with festive crown
When all unite in that bright day.

December 31st.—This day we sighted two ships and a barque, standing to the southward by the wind. At noon the weather proved fine, accompanied by a brisk breeze. We exchanged signals with the barque "Bella Donna," of Bideford. The happy, smiling faces of the sailors were more than usually excited on hearing the sounds proceeding from the watch-bell at the midnight hour, which was rung to beat the old year out and the new one in. The men were provided with various instruments of music, quite novel in their construction and sounds, with which, amid great glee, they celebrated the joyous occasion. I know many persons do and will complain of such inharmonious sounds; yet I, for one, would rather see them merry and wise than hear them quarreling by night or by day. From this time we had several foggy days and head-winds, so that for three weeks we made little progress.

January 30th.—Spoke with the barque "Jane Goudie," of, and bound for, Liverpool, from Monte Video, having left the latter place nineteen days. The Captain gave us the pleasing intelligence of the fall of Sebastopol, which

gratifying news evoked much enthusiasm from all on board.

February 2nd.—Spoke with the American ship “Sunbeam,” from Boston, U. S., bound for Valparaiso; she had been out forty-two days; she did not condescend to show her national flag, albeit the captain partly made up for this want of etiquette by civilly inquiring if we were in want of anything.

I felt very much amused one night, about eleven o'clock, soon after lying down for repose, on hearing two married ladies calling their spouses rather peremptorily to bed. One called “Tom” repeatedly, and the other exclaimed, “Come in,” or, “Come to bed;” but the husbands seemed rather inclined to sit and smoke their pipes, regardless of the commands of the fair charmers. At length, however, they both altered their tone, and used soft and persuasive words, rather than coercive ones. These tender solicitations at once produced the desired effect. This, I thought, was a valuable lesson for the ladies.

February 3rd.—Two of the lady passengers were so condescending as to make three of us on board a nice light hat each, suitable for the hot weather. In acknowledgment of their kindness, I presented them with the following simple poem, enclosing it in an envelope, and delivering it through the hands of the steward.

THE NEW HAT.

I had a dream the other night,
When stars were shining clear and bright :
Two fair ones then to me did say,
“ You want a hat—take this away.”

As I awoke, my face did shine
To hear them whisper, “ This is thine ; ”
’Twas then they did my heart beguile,
When each saluted with a smile.

The ladies then to me did say,
" We think you now look very gay ;
And as we see it on your brow,
You're much more like a sailor now.

We hope that this design will please,
And give the wearer greater ease,
Whilst through the heat you daily pass,
Than cap of cloth, or hat of grass."

They added : " It will better be
To wear a hat upon the sea ;
'Tis cooler than your cap, you'll find ;
So leave your dear old friend behind."

I now sincerely thanks return ;
Preserved by hat, I cannot burn ;
'Twill shade me from the scorching sun
As through the tropics we do run.

Now I have nothing more to dread
From rays of sun upon my head ;
And pardon me if I should say,
I love the ladies every day.

Then pray forget the fun that's past,
And promise to forgive at last ;
Then I'll have done, no more to say,
But thank you kindly ev'ry day.

February 4th.—At noon we fell in with brisk trade-winds, crossed the tropic of Capricorn in the after-part of the day, about which time we exchanged signals with the barque " Skimmer of the Seas," from California, bound for London. This being our worthy captain's birth-day, I scribbled a few lines pertinent to the occasion, and presented them to him.

February 11th.—We saw three ships and one barque running to the south-west before the wind. We exchanged signals with the ship " David Brown," which did not show her national flag ; it was supposed to have been an Ameri-

can. One of our gentleman passengers (a surgeon), who was not upon very good terms with the captain, asked me to-day to borrow an arithmetic for him, wishing me, at the same time, not to say who it was for.

February 14th.—This being my birth-day, I gave the sailors a moderate supply of grog, and likewise a glass of wine to my fellow-passengers. It was agreeable to one's feelings to hear them all give me three hearty cheers. I may here mention an incident connected with the beautiful pilot-fishes and their companion sharks. There were to-day three of the latter near the stern of the vessel, attended by their graceful little pioneers, which had never before met my view. They are admirably tinted and striped, and their proportions are very symmetrical. There were about a dozen to be seen at one time, varying from twelve to twenty-four inches in length. I understand them to be of delicious flavour.

Night after night did I lean over the railing on the vessel's poop, gazing with admiration, hour after hour, on the brilliantly-illuminated waters below, teeming with myriads of phosphorescent animalcules. On other nights, too, when the sky assumed its wonted clearness within or south of the tropics, I often stood contemplating and admiring the constellations which there spangle the heavens. The southern cross and the Magellan clouds, though occupying but a small portion of the sky, were nightly visible, and struck the eye very forcibly by their brilliancy.

February 15th.—Up to this time we were unfortunately driven by north-easterly winds much farther to the westward than was desired; but as human power and skill are too limited to counteract the elements altogether, we submitted patiently to our lot. At eight o'clock P.M., we caught a glimpse of the Pernambuco light, bearing west by north, about twelve miles distant. The captain made up his mind to run in for water; the vessel was therefore hove-to till the following morning. I slept on deck, or rather laid down on it—a custom generally adopted by my-

self, as well as by others during the hottest weather. A Brazilian brig passed us in the night; it was hailed, but not knowing the Portuguese language, we could only understand her to be from Pernambuco.

February 16th.—At daylight we caught sight of a white-washed building belonging to the town just mentioned. We were then in eighteen fathoms of water; with gentle breeze we bore up to the outer road, and cast anchor in seven fathoms, about three-quarters of a mile from the shore, immediately in front of Pernambuco. At three o'clock, our worthy commander and four of us passengers jumped into the life-boat, and, aided by the jolly tars, were shortly beyond the lighthouse and the guard ship, and landed in safety on the coast of Brazil. We accompanied the captain as he made a few preliminary inquiries, and day being declining, we merely strolled about for a time, and then returned to our ocean habitation, guided by the silvery light of the moon.

February 17th.—The captain and three others went ashore this morning, but as I felt unwell through the previous day's excitement, I remained quietly on board the vessel. The following day, as per invitation, our commander, accompanied by four of us passengers, went ashore, and dined at four o'clock with the British Consul, at his residence in the suburbs. We were most hospitably received by the host in a princely place, and found ourselves surrounded by such luxuries as fall to the lot of few. After partaking of coffee, the host invited us to take a ride in his carriage by moonlight, about half-a-dozen miles into the country—an offer which, after our long sea voyage, was not to be despised; accordingly, we waited not for it to be repeated, but at once embraced the opportunity. The moment we were about to step into the carriage, two English gentlemen rode up on horseback and consented to accompany us, the cool of the evening being the ordinary time for recreation. One of my companions and I were offered the two saddle-horses, whilst their owners rode

in the vehicle in our stead. We had a most pleasant ride over a flat country, which in some places was covered with water, caused by the unusual quantity of rain which had fallen about that time, and had even forced some country people to take their flight and seek refuge in the town. We could understand but little of the vegetation of the district, it being night; but on inquiring of the Consul the nature of some vegetable production which I saw growing in great profusion, he told me that it was the indigenous sarsaparilla, which had sprung up from the fallow-land where the sugar-cane has been frequently grown. Here also I saw numbers of fire-flies sporting about in dazzling brightness.

On returning from this moonlight ramble, we were caught in a shower of rain, and my mounted companion got unhorsed by the animal halting rather suddenly, he not being much accustomed to the saddle. We took our leave of the Consul with grateful hearts for the reception given us. Three of us decided on retiring to our cabins on the water, whilst two of my fellow-passengers, a gentleman and his wife, remained behind all night at the Consul's house, and eventually were induced to stay in the town altogether, leaving us to voyage on minus their company. By the time we three reached the water's edge it had grown very late, we therefore altered our purpose, and suffered ourselves to be prevailed upon by two English gentlemen who had accompanied us in the ride, to retire to their lodgings, at a house conducted in a most orderly manner by an English widow and her daughter, where we found every comfort that could be reasonably expected.

The following day I went on board and remained there till the vessel left. While the captain was transacting his business on shore, the gentleman alluded to above came for his luggage, when he informed me of the bright prospects which had induced him to take his leave of us so suddenly and unexpectedly.

Pernambuco contains between twenty and thirty thousand

inhabitants, composed of Portuguese, Brazilian planters, and about three hundred British subjects, principally merchants and their clerks. The slave trade is prohibited by the government to the extent of not countenancing the importation of any more, although slaves still exist, and continue with their original owners until they are able to purchase their own emancipation, which frequently takes place. They are treated, generally, with consideration and comparative kindness, especially by the few English who reside there. At the place where I took my breakfast the last time on shore, there were no less than a dozen Englishmen present, which to me appeared something like home, though the hot weather certainly prevented me from feeling that I was in England. During this final repast we were waited on by two slaves, who were remarkably active and attentive. Slaves are known in the town as such, by their going about without any covering on their feet; and for symmetry, I never saw such fine men in my life as many of them are.

The horses in Brazil, so light and small in their build, are active, although on the whole they are the worst breed I ever saw. The fruits of the district were not found very plentiful, it not being the proper season for them; still, however, we could luxuriate on abundance of oranges for three shillings per hundred, English money, which to us voyagers proved most acceptable. There are abundance of other fruits in their proper season, such as are produced in all tropical climes. Vegetables are generally dear, I believe on account of so few paying attention to their cultivation, otherwise they might be very abundant.

The entrance to the fort of Pernambuco is narrow, nor is there room for many vessels, or water of sufficient depth to admit of very large ships, inside the reef forming the harbour, which extends nearly north and south. There is a lighthouse on its northern extremity; and large ships can anchor in the road, and after getting what they need may put to sea at once, wind permitting. The boats used here are

very peculiarly constructed, some of them being as large as barges in England. I saw many catamarans floating about. There is no fear of their sinking, as they are composed entirely of logs of wood lashed firmly together, and as their tawny owners cling tenaciously to these craft, they cannot possibly get drowned. They venture out to sea for miles in these frail and rude constructions, which they use principally for fishing purposes.

The town is graced by many nice stone buildings. There are Catholic chapels, and one English chapel in the gothic style, and a theatre of no mean appearance externally. The gaol is the finest building the inhabitants can boast of. The town at this time is not so healthy as could be desired. The direful scourge of cholera had caused many a grave to be opened to receive its victims. It was very remarkable to hear that no English had suffered from its baneful effects. Numbers of fires were accustomed to be kindled at evening, in the middle of the streets, with empty casks and tar barrels, for the purpose of purifying the air. I noticed the horses are so accustomed to this phenomenon, that they were not startled by it, as some might suppose.

The city of Olinda is situated on the brow of a hill, about three miles from the port town. It is at present almost deserted, on account of the ravages of the cholera there about twelve months before my visit; although it is considered on the whole to be a healthy spot, and is likely to be filled with inhabitants again within a short time. The white-washed churches and convents, as seen from the deck of our vessel, contrasted with the luxuriant green herbage, beautifully tinged with spring-like hues, gave to the whole a charming appearance.

February 20th.—At three o'clock P.M., all things being in order, and the anchor weighed, our goodly vessel moved away from the Brazilian shores to seek those of my native land once more. The south-east trade wind proved very light; it blew more northerly than usual, and in conjunction with the north-west current prevented us crossing the line

so far eastward by many degrees as we should otherwise have done.

February 24th.—This and the following day our careful commander kept a sharp look-out for the Loccas, a dangerous low isle or reef a little above water, situated about fifty miles from the meridian of Fernando Noronha. As the north-west current was drifting us to leeward about two knots an hour, and we were to windward of it, I thought the captain acted most prudently, knowing as I did that it was only a few months since a vessel was driven on it and wrecked. The captain's wife was on board at the time; but, happily, she with her husband and the greater number of the crew were saved. The captain constructed a raft, which, however, parted asunder; but they were again providentially saved from a watery grave by being drifted on to one part of the reef, where they could stand on a firm foundation, and where they contrived to catch a few fish, which enabled them to exist until they were rescued from starvation by a vessel bound for Pernambuco, where they were landed a few days afterwards in safety. It was there that I heard this melancholy tale.

February 25th.—In the evening, at five o'clock, we sighted Fernando Noronha, passing it about seven miles to the leeward. It consists of one large and several small islands, extending about seven miles in length and two in breadth. The principal island has a projecting peak, assuming a pyramidal appearance, which I distinctly saw whilst standing on the deck. It is peopled with exiles from the Brazils.

February 27th.—This day we crossed the line; but before knowing it, I inquired of the captain if we were in zero, that is, latitude nothing, as the chief officer could neither make north nor south latitude, which impressed my mind with the conviction that we were just then crossing the line.

This occasion, like the last, did not pass off without all the male sex getting a wetting to the skin; every one,

however, seemed to take it in good part, laughing heartily at the ordeal as nothing more than a joke.

A few days after, I saw great numbers of flying fishes, of various sizes, from about four inches in length to the full-grown fish. When south of the line, I saw but an occasional one, and felt at a loss to account for such absence; but after pondering over the matter, I came to the conclusion that it was then summer there—if I may be allowed to use such a term of a region where hot weather perpetually reigns; yet if one part of the year is warmer than another within the tropics, it must be when the sun shoots down its rays in a vertical direction; consequently, if summer may be said to exist at all at the equator, or on either side of the line, it must be at such a time as I allude to. This, then, leads me to remark, in the first place, that it must have been spawning time with these little fishes, and also with their enemy the dolphin. In the second place, I imagined that this fish of prey had hoisted his flag of truce for a period, wishing (if any wish he had) to remain in a state of repose for a time, as I never saw him or any of the finny tribe so inactive before, which circumstance, I presume, sufficiently accounts for my not seeing myriads of the various kinds of flying fish with which the ocean teems, and which are as numberless as the particles of sand upon the sea-shore.

Gladly did I welcome the sight of the polar star, when first seen a few degrees north of the line. It had been invisible to me for upwards of three years.

Nothing worthy of record occurred for many days. On Sunday morning, March the 16th, we crossed the tropic of Cancer, driving before the wind at a rapid rate, with the vessel's head pointed towards our native land, which was gratifying after the light and baffling winds we had had to contend with for months past. Methought it would be more cheering still, could we know that all the children of men were as delighted to set their faces heavenward.

The following day, at noon, we caught sight of a brig,

borne along by a current, which proved fair for us also. The weather was fine, and we passed large quantities of gulf weed, the same kind, I believe, as Christopher Columbus was so perplexed about, when he fell in with it in such large quantities as to impede the progress of his ship previous to making his celebrated discoveries on the coast of America.

March 19th.—Towards noon the breeze proved strong and squally, and carried away studding sails and their accompaniments. In the evening of the twenty-second it blew a gale, and by four o'clock the following morning the wind had increased to such an extent, that the vessel was hove-to under a close-reefed main-topsail. We were tossed about so furiously, that I rose and went on deck, wondering at and admiring the giant-like waves, as they rolled towards us, alternately elevating and depressing our little craft in a most alarming manner. By ten o'clock the same night we were enabled to run under close-reefed sails, after tossing about for eighteen hours without making any progress on our voyage; indeed, on the contrary, we had got driven a few miles to the south.

March 27th.—At eleven o'clock this forenoon we sighted one of the Azores, called Pico, and at three o'clock P.M. another appeared from our larboard bows, which proved to be St. George's Island. The most elevated part of the Pico Island assumes the form of a sugar-loaf-shaped mountain, 7613 feet above the level of the sea. The peak, however, was obscured by clouds for the greater part of the time I gazed upon it; yet at intervals I caught sight of its snow-capped summit, and even down to its base, for a few moments, although the sun did not disperse the mist altogether ere it again receded from view. St. George's is very high land, and the scenery is picturesque, but we lost sight of it before dark. Our careful captain kept up on the watch during the whole of the succeeding night, in consequence of a rock being laid down in the chart as doubtful, and supposed to be about mid-channel between the two

islands of St. Michael's and Terceira. However, we passed the spot in safety during the night. We had a continuance of favourable winds and weather, though the cold did not exactly suit all constitutions, some of us having been so long accustomed to warmer climes, with an atmosphere much less humid.

We now began to feel specially anxious to sight old England after our long and tedious voyage. On the fourth of April, at eleven o'clock, we were all delighted to see the Lizards, bearing north, at about twenty miles distant. In two days more we sighted Beachy Head, and by sunset we were abreast of Hastings, at about twelve miles from the land. On the seventh, at early morn, we were off the South Foreland, within two miles of the shore, waiting the arrival of a pilot. Rising from my slumbers, I paced the deck for a considerable time, anticipating the pleasure of speedily landing, and witnessing the demonstrations of delight displayed by all on board at the near prospect of stepping on English ground once more. Perhaps I shall be excused for inserting the following lines on our return, just as they struck me at the time.

THE SAILOR'S RETURN.

All hail to thee, dear land of freedom, yet once more !
Our gallant ship is sailing near thy peaceful shore ;
The captain, crew, and all, right gladly welcome thee,
Thankful that still we live old England's isle to see.

This is our native land, to which we owe our birth ;
The thought our minds inflame, we'll sing and cherish mirth ;
Now cheerful should we be, and let ill-nature pass,
While hoping for a welcome, each from wife or lass.

Then haste we to our dear ones ; we are belov'd, depend ;
The lot's for all, I trust, who hope to find a friend.
Soon we'll pass the glass around, and merry all shall be,
And take the happy lass or the children on the knee.

Now that our voyage's o'er, let ev'ry one agree,
No more perchance to roam or voyage on the sea;
Let wives and sweethearts now around our tables meet,
And sing of Britain's land—a theme that's ever sweet.

Gladly did we welcome the pilot when he stepped on board. He having now charge of the vessel, the captain could take some repose. The wind proving light the whole day, we made but little progress, and cast anchor at sunset.

April 8th.—Our anchor being weighed at daylight this morning, our little barque, with a fair wind, glided up the river to our satisfaction. Before reaching Gravesend, we were taken in tow by a steamer, which drew us in safety into the Shadwell basin. From thence I proceeded to my home without delay; and, I need scarcely remark, was affectionately welcomed back into the bosom of my family, after an absence of three years and five months, during which time I had voyaged round the world. I had travelled four thousand three hundred and eighty miles by land, and thirty-three thousand nine hundred by water, making a total of thirty-eight thousand two hundred and eighty miles traversed altogether.

CHAPTER XI.

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SYDNEY AND ITS ENVIRONS—
SYDNEY PRICES AND RATES OF WAGES—MELBOURNE—
GEELONG—THE GOLD FIELDS OF VICTORIA AND NEW
SOUTH WALES—THE BUSH LANDS OF NEW SOUTH
WALES AND VICTORIA—HORSES, CATTLE, AND SHEEP—
INDIGENOUS FRUITS, TREES, ANIMALS, REPTILES, IN-
SECTS, BIRDS, AND FRESH-WATER FISHES—CLIMATE—
ABORIGINES, ETC., ETC.

I WILL now endeavour to give the reader some idea how this great country is situated in relation to Great Britain, and will also communicate such information as it has fallen to my lot to acquire during my residence in its cities, and my rambles in the interior, hoping that it may prove beneficial to the intending emigrant.

Australia is situated in the Pacific Ocean, lying between 10° and 39° of south latitude, and between 113° and 153° of east longitude. It extends in length from east to west 3000 miles, and in breadth from north to south 2000 miles. It contains a superficial area of 3,000,000 square miles, with a coast line of 8000, being thus almost equal to the whole of Europe in extent. It is of an irregular oval shape, and appears, from those parts of the coast which have come under my notice, to be bounded by a ridge of steep mountains, approaching within about thirty miles of the sea in some parts, while in others they extend many miles inland.

The harbour of Sydney, called Port Jackson, is universally acknowledged to be one of the finest and most picturesque in the world. The entrance to this magnificent port is between two perpendicular cliffs, or heads, as they are more frequently called, and to a stranger they appear very much like the side scenes at a theatre. The harbour seems completely land-locked until he reaches a considerable distance up the harbour's mouth, when the curtain is drawn aside, and there opens to his view the city and its surrounding scenery, shining in all their beauty. On the summit of the southernmost head stands a lighthouse, of no mean appearance, with its revolving light, so highly prized by the mariner. The building is composed of sand-stone, which abounds in that locality, this geological formation extending nearly a hundred miles inland. The evergreen foliage, as seen from the harbour, studding the miniature islands and the main land, and gracing the villas and picturesque cottages, produces a most exquisite picture, while ships of all sizes and from various nations, which either lay at anchor or are floating about the haven, give quite an English aspect to the scene.

The capital of New South Wales is situated $33^{\circ} 55'$ south latitude, and $151^{\circ} 25'$ east longitude, and about seven miles from the entrance of the harbour. The distance from England is computed to be 14,000 miles in round numbers, although, considering the zigzag course a vessel is of necessity compelled to take, the voyager may calculate upon sailing 16,000 miles before reaching it. It contains upwards of eighty thousand inhabitants, and is for the greater part built of sand-stone, which is in many cases quarried out from the very foundation of the town itself. There are numerous fine buildings, assuming the same architectural appearance as we are familiar with in the mother country. The government house is of modern construction, and its commanding site at once strikes the eye of the newly arrived emigrant. It is the residence of the Governor-general for the time being. At the time of my writing, this

important trust is invested in the hands of Sir William Denison, who seems to give universal satisfaction. The style of architecture is a mixture of the Gothic and Elizabethan orders. The library and museum, the churches and chapels, a Roman Catholic cathedral, the emigration and military barracks, the hotels, together with a considerable number of public houses, a college in the course of erection, and a cathedral connected with the Church of England, have altogether an imposing appearance, which the public buildings of many towns in older countries cannot boast of.

The government Assembly House must not be passed over, it being an edifice of great importance, where the members of the legislative council meet weekly, to transact business affecting the interests of the colony. Whatever is passed by them, and receives the sanction of the Governor, is binding, and operates as the law of New South Wales.

The police department is a most excellent one, and is conducted upon the principles of the London establishments. There are paid as well as unpaid magistrates, gentlemen distinguished for strict integrity and high respectability, who sit on the bench daily, dealing out justice in a most impartial manner.

There are several respectable places for educating the youthful mind in the city, including a public grammar school, with two hundred pupils, where young gentlemen may obtain a first-rate education. There is also the university, which has been established about three years, having professors of a high repute for talent. There is the King's School, too, at Paramatta, distant by railroad about fourteen miles, where the educational advantages are of the first order.

The new Exchange, in course of erection, is of large dimensions, and displays considerable architectural beauty. For the new-comer, in affluent circumstances, there are first-rate hotels, where board and residence can be procured, with every comfort, at prices varying from three pounds

ten shillings per week up to six pounds; but for the immigrant in more humble circumstances, board and lodging may be obtained from twenty-five shillings up to three pounds per week.

The greater part of the wholesale business is transacted by the auctioneers, as soon as goods are landed from the ships. Sometimes fearful sacrifices are made by speculators in the mother country, by consigning goods to their respective agents, or otherwise. I have myself made purchases of various merchandise fully one hundred per cent. less than the English prices, and opportunities of that kind frequently occur; but, on the other hand, goods are sometimes so sold as to realise enormous profits. On the whole, it appears to me a great risk for persons unacquainted with the peculiarities of the Australian market, to send out goods at a venture.

The shops and the market-house have a very imposing appearance, and witness a great trade, especially on the Saturday evening, when they are crowded. They are then laid out tastefully with colonial and European productions in great varieties, British goods, of course, predominating.

George and Pitt Streets are the principal thoroughfares, although in others of less note a great deal of business is transacted, especially with the settlers and squatters from the bush. The city numbers upwards of eighty thousand inhabitants, which seems to me a wonderful fact, when I consider that about sixty years ago there was to be nothing seen on the spot except a few small scattered huts, peopled for the most part by the refuse population of the mother country; but the new and populous city that has so rapidly risen, contains highly respectable men of all callings and professions, with intellect of the first order. The city is supplied with water from a part called Botany Bay, although, strictly speaking, the reservoir is not near the bay itself, as that contains only salt water, but is situated a few miles from Sydney, on a sandy soil, producing excellent water from abundant springs. Although so sterile in appearance,

however, it is surprising to witness the varieties of botanical specimens which the soil produces, and which I have gathered with my own hands more than once. Not far from the town is a hill, called Cook's Mount, where, it is stated, that enterprising navigator stood to view the surrounding country, it being the highest elevation near Botany Bay.

The Botanical Garden of the town is greatly resorted to, especially by the more genteel portion of the community, where they can study and admire, not only the indigenous flowers, plants, and shrubs of New Holland, but also those of most other countries. There are many beautiful varieties of tropical flowers and plants tastefully laid out in ornamental beds, upon grassy lawns, which are kept in excellent order, and furnished with rustic seats, to accommodate the weary. All the indigenous trees are evergreen. The palm, the banana, and the Norfolk pine, are here seen in great luxuriance. The latter is very striking and remarkable, throwing out lateral branches at regular intervals, and assuming the character of the beautiful cypress. The British oak, with its peculiar leaves, is not to be mistaken by those who have seen it in perfection; but here it is of stunted growth. The weeping willows gracing these beautiful grounds are greatly to be admired. There are many pleasant walks about the gardens and domain. The promenade leading to Lady Macquarrie's chair, which is hewn out of a rock, affords the pedestrian one of the pleasantest rambles he could desire, in addition to a resting-place where he can, from this lady's seat, feast his eyes upon the vessels and boats studding the different beautiful bays that indent the harbour in almost every direction. Here he may sit, and, perchance, fancy himself in fairy-land, until he is awoke from his reverie by the cheerful voice of some passers-by.

The race-course is the great promenade of the citizens, where there is an excellent cricket-ground, which hundreds of the inhabitants resort to frequently to enjoy that manly game. While the mother country was at war with Russia, the citizens were very active in organizing volunteer rifle,

artillery, and cavalry corps, and on field-days they attracted great numbers of the population to the Government domain, where they went through their evolutions with great dexterity.

The north side of the harbour is beginning to attract great attention. There are already numbers of houses built, with a goodly population residing there. Two miniature steamboats ply to and fro every half hour of the day. Fourteen miles of railway too have been laid down, and were recently opened to the public. The line extends to the town of Paramatta, and it is intended to continue it inland as soon as means can be obtained to carry it out. I took several trips on it for about eight miles, and felt pleased with such a beginning, believing as I do that it is the great desideratum, in the absence of navigable rivers, to the prosperity of the interior of the country. There is a great population springing up for many miles out of Sydney, both on the Great Western track, which leads through Paramatta over the Blue Mountains to Bathurst, and also on the Great Southern road, leading through Liverpool towards the province of Victoria. The distance to Liverpool from Sydney is 20 miles; to Gundagai, 244; to Tarentta, 280; to Albury, 379; and from thence to Melbourne, upwards of 200 miles more, thus making the overland trip to the capital of Victoria nearly six hundred miles.

It is gratifying to know that an exploring expedition was sent into the interior not long since, under the auspices of the Home Government, which will no doubt make some valuable geographical discoveries. The land in the immediate vicinity of Sydney appears to the newly arrived immigrant most sterile; but after he has tried the effect of cultivation, he will soon be convinced of its great productive power. Most vegetables may be reared in great perfection; this result, however, proceeding more from the peculiar favorableness of the climate than the natural fertility of the soil. There is a large quantity of barley grown, which is cut in the green state and sold in bundles for horses—a kind of

food which seems to suit them, as I have frequently used it for my own.

There is a good opening here for a few market gardeners, and persons who understand the rearing of poultry. In either case, industrious people with a moderate capital might do exceedingly well, as vegetables and poultry are extravagantly dear in the Sydney markets. There are very few who pay proper attention to growing European fruits and vegetables, and wherever I had seen ordinary care bestowed upon them, the climate is so propitious at all seasons that one might get abundance of vegetables, and even green peas and other delicacies, almost every month in the year. I have conversed with several practical men upon the subject; and having more taste for gardening and agricultural pursuits generally than for any others, I have probably on that account paid more attention to this subject, and the opinions of residents in Australia in relation to it, than I should otherwise have done, and which have brought me to the conclusion just stated.

I will now lay before the reader the following particulars relative to the Sydney provision and labour market. Being a strictly faithful account, and of a recent date, it may not only prove interesting, but be at the same time a useful guide to the intending emigrant, to whatever class he may happen to belong.

SYDNEY PRICES.

PROVISIONS.

Fine flour, per ton of 2,000 pounds,
£45

Seconds, £42

Ration, £35

Wheat, from 15s. to 17s. 6d. per bus.

Bread, the 2lb. loaf, 9d.

Calves, from 25s. to 35s.

Lambs, none in the market, or they
would sell at high rates.

Beef, averages 2½d. per lb. by the
carcase.

Mutton, averages from 2d. to 2½d.
per lb. by the carcase. The retail
prices, of course, a shade higher.

Pigs, 8½d. per lb. by the carcase.

Roasting pigs, from 6s. to 8s. each.

POULTRY AND DAIRY PRODUCE.

Fowls, from 6s. to 7s. per couple.

Ducks, from 8s. to 9s. per couple.

Pigeons—generally wild ones, shot
in the bush, 2s. per couple.

Geese, 14s. each.

Turkeys, from 20s. to 25s. each.
 Salt butter, from 1s. 6d. to 2s. per lb.
 Fresh ditto, from 2s. to 2s. 9d. per lb.
 Cheese, colonial, from 1s. to 13d. per lb.
 Ditto, English, from 2s. to 2s. 6d. per lb.
 Bacon and hams, from 8d. to 9d. per lb.
 Lard, from 8d. to 9d. per lb.
 Eggs, 1s. 4d. per dozen, but seldom so low as the above price.

VEGETABLES.

Potatoes, new, from 16s. to 18s. per cwt.
 Ditto, old, from 8s. to 9s. per cwt.
 Cabbages, from 4s. to 8s. per doz.
 Cauliflowers, from 4s. to 9s. per doz.
 Lettuces, from 1s. to 2s. 6d. per doz.

Turnips, from 2s. to 3s. per doz.
 Celery, from 5s. to 8s. per doz.
 Leeks, from 1s. to 2s. 6d. per doz.
 Pumpkins, from 4s. to 10s. per doz.
 Parsnips, from 4s. to 5s. per doz.
 Carrots, from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. per doz., or dozen bunches, as the case may be.
 Peas, green, from 7s. to 9s. per bsl.
 Beans, broad, from 6s. to 8s. per bsl.
 Loquats, 8s. per basket.
 Oranges, 9d. to 2s. 10d. per doz.
 Lisbon Lemons, 2s.; other kinds, 4d. per doz.

FORAGE.

Hay, from £5 to £10 per ton.
 Straw, from £7 to £9 per ton.
 Maize, from 3s. to 4s. per bushel.
 Green food, 1s. 6d. per doz. bundles.

As to the current rate of wages in Sydney, no material alteration had very recently occurred. The general complaint is, that there are not more arrivals of emigrants, who are in great demand for the country districts, and more especially a particular class of servants whose moral character may be depended upon. There are already hundreds there doing little more than eye-service, and loitering their time away at the public-houses and sly grog-shops whenever an opportunity occurs. I have been an employer myself, and can confidently state that there are few servants whom the master can trust out of his sight. I therefore state, without fear of contradiction, that if the industrious and prudent man has any idea whatever of departing from his native land, he may be certain of obtaining immediate and remunerating employment. The following quotations will give a better idea than a whole volume would be likely to do without figures.

TOWN WAGES.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.		
Bookbinders,	2	10	0	to	4	0	0	Printing work	3	0	0	to	3	6	0
according to								Compositors on	4	0	0				
competency,															
per week,															
from															

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Morning pa- pers rates—			Male servants,		
Long Primer			per annum,		
equalised to			and found,	30 0 0 to 45 0 0	
1s. 6d. per			from		
1000, and 1s.			Cooks, per an-		
7d. per hour			num, and	40 0 0 „ 60 0 0	
overtime. At	4 10 0		found, from		
these rates			Grooms, per		
men can			annum, and	40 0 0 „ 50 0 0	
earn, accord-			found, from		
ing to com-			Gardeners, per		
petency, per			annum, and	35 0 0 „ 45 0 0	
week, from			found, from		
Painters, per			General female		
day	0 10 0 to 0 12 0		servants, per		
Plumbers, per			annum, and	18 0 0 „ 26 0 0	
day	0 12 0 „ 0 15 0		found, from		
Carpenters,			Female cooks,		
per day	0 12 0 „ 0 16 0		per annum,		
Coopers, per day	0 10 0 „ 0 12 0		and found,	26 0 0 „ 30 0 0	
Joiners „	0 14 0 „ 0 16 0		from		
Plasterers „	0 16 0 „ 0 17 0		Lanndresses,		
Ditto Labour-		0 10 0	per annum,		
ers, per day			and found,	26 0 0 „ 30 0 0	
Masons „	0 15 0 „ 0 16 0		from		
Ditto Labour-		0 10 0	Housemaids,		
ers, per day			per annum,		
Quarrymen,			and found,	18 0 0 „ 20 0 0	
per day	0 16 0 „ 0 18 0		from		
Blacksmiths,			Nursemaids,		
per day	0 8 4 „ 0 14 0		per annum,		
Carters, per day	0 7 4 „ 0 9 0		and found,	18 0 0 „ 20 0 0	
			from		

COUNTRY WAGES,

Including Rations, which are found, and are as follows:—Flour, 8 lbs. to 14 lbs.; sugar, 2 lbs.; tea, $\frac{1}{4}$ lb., weekly.

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Farm labour-			Shepherds, per		
ers, per an-			num, from	25 0 0 to 30 0 0	
num, from	30 0 0 to 35 0 0		Stockmen, per		
Ditto, married			annum, from	40 0 0 „ 50 0 0	
couples, per	40 0 0 „ 50 0 0		Bullock driv-		
annum, from			ers, per an-	40 0 0 „ 50 0 0	
Hut keepers,			num, from		
per annum,	20 0 0 „ 25 0 0				
from					

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Coasting, per month	4	0	0	India and China, and back	4	10	0
England	6	0	0	Valparaiso and back	4	0	0
Great Britain, by way of	4	10	0	Steamer's seaman	6	0	0
India and China				Ditto fireman	12	0	0
New Zealand	5	0	0	Ditto trimmers	9	0	0
Southseamen	6	0	0				

DESCRIPTION OF MELBOURNE.

Melbourne, the capital of Victoria, is situated on the banks of the river Yarra Yarra, seven miles from where it disembogues into Hobson's Bay, but only three from Williamstown, the port town, as the crow flies. The city has wonderfully increased in size and population during the few years which have elapsed since the first gold discovery, and is probably without parallel in the history of any other country.

Twenty years ago, the site of the present city was all but a wilderness, containing an occasional hut shortly after it began to be settled; but during some six years it has prospered so greatly, that the population now is numbered at very little short of one hundred thousand souls. The jetty of Hobson's Bay is in latitude 37—51° s., longitude 145—6° E. Vessels of shallow draught ascend the river to the city wharfs to discharge cargo, but those of great tonnage anchor off Williamstown, and are either unloaded by barges, small sailing crafts, or steamers. Melbourne is abundantly supplied with good water, and its broad streets are laid out at right angles. The principal ones are Great Collins and Swanston streets, and Great Bourk street, where the new theatre stands, which is capable of containing 5000 people, and a splendid building it is. Elizabeth street, too, must be classed among the first order, where there is a large amount of business done, and which can boast of a first-rate hotel, that formerly produced the enormous rental of £2000 per annum.

The Exhibition building attracts the notice of most strangers on visiting the city. It is built of glass, and is a

miniature imitation of the great palace of Hyde Park, London.

The Town Hall and the Supreme Court deserve attention as very fine structures, built of the blue granite rock so abundant in the district, and which is also used extensively for macadamizing the streets and principal roads leading from the city to the interior. The Prison house is a substantial building, surrounded by a high wall; and the Hospital certainly merits great praise, in which no less than six hundred beds can be made up, if required.

A stranger, on his first arrival, is amused to see the diggers riding in and out of the city in large vans, some going, whilst others are returning from some of the diggings. They assume rather an eccentric appearance with their long beards; and being generally armed with revolvers, they are formidable-looking fellows, and would no doubt prove so if the bush-rangers tested their courage on their way to the gold-fields.

The goodly number of newly-erected places of worship would seem to indicate that the inhabitants are not devoid of religious principles and feelings, without which all else is worthless. There are various denominations in the city; consequently, there are many different buildings; and it is to be hoped that there exists among them that unity of spirit and bond of peace which characterize true Christianity. There are several handsome English churches, Wesleyan chapels, Presbyterian churches, a Jewish synagogue, Roman Catholic chapels, and a magnificent cathedral belonging to the same denomination.

Melbourne possesses several highly respectable schools, independently of a training school and the University. It also can boast of several daily papers, having a large circulation. The "Argus" takes the lead, and in point of numbers the editor arrogates to himself to be second only to one journal in the world—a fact which is truly astonishing in relation to a young colony like that of Victoria.

The mounted police are a respectable body of men, com-

posed principally of gentlemen's sons, who have proved themselves totally unfit to rough it in performing labour at the diggings. Their pay is 12s. 6d. per day. The foot police, too, are a nice set of men, and consist for the most part of those who have performed similar duties in the mother country. They are paid 10s. per diem. Vacancies are generally filled up by those who have previously served in the police force in England.

Here, as well as in Sydney, there is great business done by the auctioneers; and to give the reader a faint idea of the fearful losses accruing from sales during the last few months, I will merely state a few things which attracted my attention during a great glut in the markets of certain classes of goods, assuming that the English prices are generally well known. Gentleman's respectable black hats were sold for one shilling each, and a pair (or more) of long leather boots, such as were suitable for miners, were disposed of for five shillings per pair. Colt's revolvers were knocked down for twenty shillings each, and Dean, Adams, and Co.'s for thirty shillings. Melbourne has been remarkable for the great quantity of jewellery sold there since the gold discovery. Some very respectable articles are sometimes to be procured; but, generally speaking the major part of what glitters in the windows is complete rubbish; and you may see most of the great boys throughout the two colonies with a *cold* ring on the finger, unless, indeed, the warmth of the hand demonstrates the cheat, by tarnishing it and changing its colour.

The suburbs of Melbourne are exceedingly imposing, and merely a glance beyond the city boundaries will convince the stranger of the go-ahead character of the colonists generally, for I believe the environs are comparable with those of most modern towns and cities of Europe. Brighton is a delightful spot, commanding a full view of Hobson's Bay. The late Lieutenant Governor, Sir Charles Hotham, had taken up his residence here. At Richmond, the government domain is well worthy of a visit. It is very

picturesquely laid out, with a park-like appearance. Some police barracks are built upon these grounds. There are great varieties of water-fowl disporting on the water, and numerous kinds of European fruits and vegetables are grown in the locality. St. Kilda is another pretty spot, and can boast of a beautiful miniature park; while Sandridge, with its line of railroad from Melbourne, has no mean appearance.

Both Collingwood and North Melbourne comprise a great population, independently of the city proper. Princes Bridge is a magnificent structure, composed of hard blue granite, and is the finest erection of the kind in any part of Australia. In passing over this bridge, you soon come upon the Military and the Immigration Aid Barracks, situated immediately opposite each other on a hillock, and occupying the site of the original Canvass Town; for government compelled the heterogeneous assemblages collected there to quit the spot they had so unceremoniously taken up. Dr. Earley is at the head of the last-named establishment. This gentleman is the proper person for the newly-arrived immigrant to apply to, for information of any kind touching the colony, and from whom he will most assuredly receive every attention that he can reasonably expect. The novice can not only seek for advice at this establishment, but he is also at liberty to place boxes and any valuable property in the hands of the authorities residing there, where every care will be taken of the same, free of expense to the depositor. This is a great boon, and should not be lost sight of by the new-comer. By availing himself of this privilege, he may guard against imposition from other quarters, of which otherwise he may have to repent when it is too late.

Emerald Hill is situated on a picturesque, commanding eminence, about a mile from the city, contiguous to the barracks just alluded to: the town contains a considerable number of inhabitants, who return one or two members to the Legislative Council.

MELBOURNE RATE OF WAGES, ETC., UP TO 1856.

WITH RATIONS.

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Married couples, without families, per annum, from	80	0 0	to	100	0 0
Married couples, with families, per annum, from	60	0 0	„	80	0 0
Gardeners, per annum, from	50	0 0	„	60	0 0
Grooms, per annum, from	50	0 0	„	65	0 0
Stock-keepers, per annum, from	60	0 0	„	70	0 0
Hut-keepers, per annum, from	40	0 0	„	50	0 0
General farm servants, in great demand, per week, from				1	17 0
Bullock drivers on the roads, per week, from	1	10 0	„	2	0 0
Bullock drivers on stations, per week, from	1	5 0	to	1	10 0
Men cooks, per annum, from	70	0 0	„	90	0 0
Female cooks, per annum, from	30	0 0	„	45	0 0
Thorough female servants, in great demand, per annum, from	30	0 0	„	40	0 0
Housemaids, per annum, from	20	0 0	„	28	0 0
Laundresses, per annum, from	30	0 0	„	35	0 0
Nursemaids, per annum, from	15	0 0	„	20	0 0

Where servants are not kept in the kitchen, the following are considered the standard weekly rations; but the general rule is, plenty to eat, no waste—12 lbs. beef or mutton; 10 lbs. flour; 2 lbs. sugar; $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. tea.

WITHOUT RATIONS.

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Compositors, per 1,000		0	1	4	
Ditto, by week	4	4 0			
Pressmen, „	4	4 0	to	4	10 0
Carpenters, per day	0	12 0	„	0	15 0
Masons, per day	0	15 0	„	0	18 0
Plasterers „	0	14 0	„	0	17 0
Bricklayers „	0	14 0	„	0	17 0
Blacksmiths, per day	0	16 0	„	0	20 0
Quarrymen, per day	0	12 0	„	0	14 0
Woodsplitters, per ton	0	5 0	to	0	7 0
Fencers, by the rod, materials to split, only	0	6 0			
Labourers on the roads, wood, water, and tents found, per day	0	10 0	„	0	12 0

The town of Geelong is situated about forty miles from the capital of Victoria, at the head of Corio Harbour, which is a splendid natural basin (leading out of Hobson's Bay), capable of containing the whole British navy in safety. The approach to it, however, just off Point Henry, about six miles distant, is obstructed by a bar of mud and sand, which is a great obstacle to vessels drawing much water. When I first arrived in the colony, all shipping with a draught of more than ten feet were compelled to lighten to that draught, or else rest content to lay below the bar, off Point Henry, and discharge their cargo there, which alternative most masters of vessels preferred. Since that time, a dredging machine has been at work clearing and deepening it, so that there are now, I believe, fourteen feet of water over the bar. A fine wharf has recently been opened adjacent to the town, which gives Geelong great advantages over Melbourne, so far as regards maritime affairs. One great drawback, however, to the town is the want of better water, especially in the summer season. It is supplied at present from an adjacent river; but as the population increases, there will, no doubt, be pure water substituted for it, as it is to be procured at an inconsiderable distance from the town.

Geelong has been laid out with great judgment, the three main streets running parallel with the others at right angles. In the centre of the town, a spacious plot of ground is reserved, called Market Square, to which purpose it is intended to be applied. There are many nice buildings which this modern town can boast of, in churches, chapels, and substantial houses of no ordinary size. There is a large trade done here, not only among its numerous population, but also with many storekeepers at the various diggings, which are more closely connected with it than with Melbourne. Large quantities of goods find their way from Geelong to the famous Ballarat gold-fields.

Within a few miles of the town, a goodly number of acres of land have been brought under cultivation, besides which there is a large quantity of plain, level, grassy land, which

sustains great numbers of sheep. The railroad (in course of formation) runs through some of the level parts; and from the general appearance of the soil thus exposed to view, it certainly seems suitable to grow almost every luxury upon.

For the information of those intending to try their luck at any of the gold-fields of Australia, I will state the names of the principal diggings in New South Wales and Victoria, leaving the choice to be made by the adventurer himself. After my own observation of the different diggings which I visited, and a few months' practical experience upon one of them, I can only say that it would be folly for me to advise the stranger to go to any particular one. I have often been struck with this when noticing publications in which the writer has recommended one place in preference to others, without stating his reasons for such a precedence. Such indiscriminate advice is extremely injudicious and dangerous. My reasons for not pursuing this course are, in the first place, that some diggings prove the most lucrative in the summer on account of the large body of water frustrating the designs of the miner in the rainy season; while, on the other hand, there are some rich gold-fields which cannot be properly worked except in the winter, in consequence of the scarcity of water in the dry seasons, needed to wash out the auriferous earth, or for the domestic purposes of the miner. In the second place, the fields already discovered are so subject to fluctuations, owing to the caprices and the good or bad luck of the diggers, that it is impossible at any one particular time to draw a just conclusion. A place, after being worked for many months is sometimes all at once abandoned, and a bad name in consequence is given to it; while shortly afterwards, a lucky party lingering there makes some grand discovery, the news whereof flies as by electric telegraph to other diggings, and in the course of a few days or weeks, thousands are again seen plodding back. Besides which, new gold-fields are continually being discovered.

I trust these reasons will suffice for not prompting the new-comer to go to any particular spot which he might chance

to have a predilection for. The adventurer to the gold-fields can daily read the newspapers either in Sydney, Melbourne, or Geelong, and he will there see all such particulars as are likely to interest him. I will add this one remark, that should I return to Australia (as it is more than probable that I shall), I would then practise myself what I now recommend to others; for if I decided to try my hand again at the diggings, I should sift out all the recent news concerning both new and old-established gold-fields, and act accordingly.

THE GOLD-FIELDS.

The first gold-field in Australia that was regularly worked was opened in the beginning of the year 1851; it is situated near Bathurst, and is called Summer-hill Creek. That locality, since the time of the gold discoveries, has yielded large quantities of the precious metal, and the operations have been extended very widely to the Lewis Ponds—to the Junction between the Frederick's Valley and Summer-hill Creeks, from thence branching out in various directions. Oaky Creek, west of Summer-hill, is another gold-field, which falls into the Macquarrie river at the junction of several small creeks west of Bosh's Creek. Then again, the auriferous region extends from the junction of the last-named creek to Killumbutta and Wallumbutta, to the junction of the Turon. The Turon river, from its connection with the Macquarrie, to the Cudgegong and Callallia Creeks, to an extent of 140 miles, is supposed to be auriferous, and will by-and-by form one vast chain of diggings. It is generally supposed that the day is not very far distant when the Turon Mountains, and the vicinity of the World's-end, will eventually yield the precious metal. Gold has also been found below the junction of the Isabella with the Abercrombie rivers.

Those known as the Northern diggings are situated about 120 miles from Bathurst, and about 170 westward of Maitland. The Hanging Rock (called so from the fact of its

being a tremendous rock, towering high in the air, with the upper portion hanging over very considerably) is the place first worked in this district, and although the extent of the diggings extended greatly from time to time, they continued to be called by this their original name. The extensive table-land of the New England district commences near this place. The Oakenville Creek is a branch from the Hanging Rock, which has been dug up for a distance of about three miles. The Happy Valley is another branch proceeding from the Hanging Rock, and is situated about a mile from the Peel river. This also is another rich gold-field recently opened; and from reliable information I received a few days previously to sailing from Sydney, I am induced to believe that this is one of the surest diggings yet discovered in New South Wales. These northern diggings seem to go a-head fast, and are daily gaining for themselves a good name. They now reach over a most extensive tract of ground; and as the poor man may there safely depend on obtaining good wages without extraordinary labour, there is no doubt of the rapid prosperity of the region.

The Southern diggings, near the Shoalhaven river, are also known as the Braidwood diggings. The Little River is one field for the gold-seeker, where the precious metal has been found chiefly in nuggetty forms. Bell's Flat are shallow diggings. Bell's and Major's Creeks have both proved very rich. The Araluen is a continuation of the two former named creeks, and commences at the spot where those two form a junction. The first spot is termed the Upper Araluen, and about five miles down the creek, on a flat piece of ground, is situated the second Araluen diggings, known as the lower ones. The whole flat, from the upper to the lower, may eventually prove auriferous, as at each end it is already successfully worked on the sides of the creek. During my rambles in that locality, I had several opportunities of conversing with respectable and intelligent men, who had been out with others prospecting, and who invariably found gold even on the mountains, imbedded in a quartz matrix; and

from the geological formation of the country, it is not unlikely that ere long it will turn out to be an extensive gold-field, with a great population settled thereon, as the climate is splendid, and good water may be had in abundance.

The Victoria gold-fields are well known to have produced enormous quantities of the precious metal. The three localities first discovered were Clunes, Ballarat, and Mount Alexander diggings. The first is about forty miles from Melbourne, where the gold was found in alluvial deposits, chiefly consisting of quartz gravel. The Ballarat field is situated on the river Leigh, about seventy-five miles from the capital, and about forty-five from Geelong. Here gold has been procured in large quantities, and is still producing it as freely as ever. It is here found in lumps of various sizes, as well as in a gravelated form, scattered through three or four successive strata, principally composed of clay and gravel; but the richest beds are at the depth of from 20 to 190 feet from the surface, where the gold is deposited in or on the top of the blue clay, four or five inches in thickness. The shafts at these extraordinary depths are obliged to be propped up all round, in order to prevent the falling in of the sides; but for this precaution, they would be highly dangerous. Such deep sinking is necessarily very expensive; and it being a mere speculation whether, after all, the shaft will yield any considerable quantity of gold, this mode of proceeding is extremely hazardous, either ruining or making the fortunes of the diggers, according as they turn up either blanks or prizes. The famous Mount Alexander was the third gold-field discovered, and the well-known Bendigo soon afterwards attracted great attention. This latter, combined with the former, occupy a great extent of country, varying from 70 to 100 miles from Melbourne, where there is one vast gold-field, with an immense population.

Then there is the Mac Ivor and Goulbourn diggings, the latter being situated near a river of that name, and the former on a creek, with its township thriving in a manner truly incredible. The Ovens diggings, where the township

of Beechworth is established, is situated near a river of the same name, about two hundred miles from Melbourne, and thirty from the township of Albury on the river Murray, which is the boundary of the two colonies at that particular part. There are various ramifications of these diggings; but most of the minor creeks fall into the main one, which is termed Spring Creek; Reed's Creek being a continuation of the former, about five miles below the water-falls, where all the waters of these various creeks and diggings are discharged between two precipitous rocky mountains, falling to a considerable distance below. These extensive diggings are composed of Spring Creek, the government headquarters, Reed's Creek below, Yackandandy, the three, four, and nine mile creeks. The Little and the Ovens rivers, like the Omeo diggings, (the latter being adjacent to the Snowy Mountains) have not been properly tried. The same remark applies to various others, which have not yet received recognised geographical names. To give all particulars relative to the already discovered fields would fill the pages of a large volume; and, as I previously stated, even then the intending gold-seeker could not possibly form any satisfactory conclusion, for by the time of his arrival in Australia, the face of those auriferous localities would be so materially changed as to render much of his information useless.

THE BUSH LANDS OF AUSTRALIA.

I will now communicate to the reader the result of my observations relative to the bush lands of New South Wales and Victoria, doing my best to make him understand me whilst in imagination he accompanies me on my journeys.

Soon after entering the wilds of Australia, I was struck with the singular appearance of the various slab huts which ever and anon met my view. They are built of wood, split into broad pieces, so as to resemble rough boards. These slabs are generally about two inches in thickness. The frame-work is made, and the slabs are nailed at the upper

ends on to a beam fastened lengthwise, the bottom ends being made tight to a sleeper on the ground. The floors are generally composed of mother earth, and the roofs are for the most part composed of the bark from the stringy bark or box trees; occasionally, however, shingles, as they are called, are used, which consist of the timber cut into short lengths and split for that purpose. The major part of the bush habitations are built according to the above plan. There are here and there some very nice substantial houses built with stone, roofed in with slate, and having the luxury of boarded floors, with rooms very nicely furnished. These, however, belong almost exclusively to the wealthy squatters.

With regard to clearing the land, it is customary for settlers to cut down the timber either with axe or saw, leaving the stumps standing three or four feet out of the ground; they then draw the timber off the land to burn it or else set fire to it on the spot, whichever happens to be most convenient to them. I have several times conversed with settlers upon the propriety of digging round the roots, of the trees, so as to undermine them, and leave it for the first strong wind to blow them down. Many have coincided with my views on the subject, but at the same time have urged that the claims of other duties would not allow them to take so much trouble about these matters.

There are very few gardens to be seen in the interior, which surprised me very much at first; but the reason soon became apparent, when I saw how many of the settlers rode their horses about from one grog shop to another. I have known some of the wives of these men, aided by a son or a daughter, who, rather than dispense with the luxury of fresh vegetables, would themselves set to work digging up the ground, wheeling away the weeds in a barrow, and so at length form neat little gardens. It is rare for the bush travellers to be able to procure vegetables, which is a serious deprivation.

The rough kind of farming witnessed in the bush would

at first sight prove rather distasteful to the English agriculturist, although his practical knowledge would be of little value to him, unless corrected by observations on the spot. Very slight dressing is used for the crops, and in most cases none at all, although there is a tolerable quantity to be had whenever the settler will put himself to the trouble of taking it out of the stock-yard. The settlers are habitual smokers; and being particularly fond of horse-riding, it is an invariable rule to carry their short pipes with them whenever they stray from home, which they will often smoke from morning till night, except during the short interval required for tea drinking. They call at most of the huts, to light a fresh pipe of tobacco, whenever they ride across the bush, all the neighbours within a score miles of each other being generally on a friendly footing; so much so that whenever a person is seen coming, before he alights from his horse the kettle is put on the fire, and, by the aid of blazing sticks, there is soon produced a pannican of tea, which is placed on the table, together with beef and damper, thus giving the visitor a right hearty welcome. This is an excellent trait in their character. It matters not who it is that chances to look in; whether it be one of their neighbours or kindred, or a stranger from a foreign land, he is sure to meet with a warm reception, and be even pressed to rest himself and renew his journey another day. During my travels, many times have I experienced such cordial hospitality, and oftentimes have I seen half-a-dozen more travellers partake of the same kindness.

From the numerous conversations which I have had with these settlers, I am prepared to state that, in most cases, those who were not possessed of ten pounds when they landed, are now worth hundreds and thousands, were they to sell out; their property consisting principally of cattle, horses, and cleared paddocks. It must be observed, however, that in cases of prosperity, there is a disposition to work, though not to the extent that is common in the old country, where the poor man slaves from the

rising of the sun till it sinks below the horizon. In Australia, industry is certain to meet with a corresponding reward.

I must not omit to allude to one draw-back to Australian prosperity, which is the only one known to me; I refer to the drought which has hitherto occurred about once in seven, ten, or a greater number of years; and which, although it ruins but few, yet occasions serious losses to some in particular parts of the country.

Cattle farming is the most free and least troublesome life with which I am acquainted. Neither masters nor men have much labour to perform, and can enjoy themselves even when engaged in collecting their cattle, which takes place only a few times during the year, either to make a selection for the market or to brand the calves. When the time comes round for the performance of this task, the neighbours mutually assist each other, thus rendering it neither more or less than a season of pleasurable excitement. They always keep several good riding horses for the purpose; the men and animals performing on these occasions such feats of agility, in galloping down steep declivities, that many English hunters would stand aghast to see them.

The settlers generally are great readers, and the traveller will often see some sort of a library in the most humble place; and to those who can prize the pleasures of reading, it would be no matter of wonder to witness the eagerness with which they lay hold of any fresh book, or a newspaper, especially one from the mother country, even if it be six months old. The sheep farmers seemed to me to lead the most monotonous and wearisome life; indeed, as I saw the shepherds day after day crawling behind the sheep, I thought that would be the last occupation of bush life which I should choose, although it has proved to the owners very lucrative, and is sometimes honoured with noblemen's sons for shepherds and hut keepers. The duty of the latter is to cook for the shepherd and himself, staying in the hut all day, and sleeping near the sheep at night,

with dogs for his companions, while the shepherd uses the hut for his dormitory.

There are very few what are to be termed agriculturists in either New South Wales or Victoria, as the country is peculiarly characterized by its grazing capabilities. I trust, however, that the day is not far distant when thousands of acres of good land may be purchased at a moderate price, so that numbers will then be induced to cultivate land who are now unable to purchase it, in consequence of the squatting licences that exist; indeed, from information received through a reliable channel, previous to leaving the country, there is every probability of large tracts of land being thrown open, in suitable lots, before the lapse of any considerable period.

Many times have I been a witness of the alarming and dangerous fires which are kindled in the bush, often by the settlers themselves, who set it on fire purposely, with the intention of burning off the long rank grass, to make way for the young sweet grass which springs up after the first few wet days. But these bush fires do not always end without doing great damage to the fences, and endangering life. The settlers are obliged to be on the alert, prepared with green branches of trees, to beat it out when it threatens the stations. It sometimes happens, however, that the roads, creeks, and even cattle tracts, will put a stop to its further progress. I have seen the fences round large wheat paddocks burnt quite down to the ground, and at a time when the corn was well nigh ready for the sickle; but in this case the energy of the owners and neighbours saved the crops from the devouring element. Huts, too, I have known burnt quite down to the ground, the only vestige left to tell of the former spot whereon they stood being a few ashes.

It is very difficult to convey a correct idea of life in the bush, so very different as it is from life in the towns of a civilized country; but it is worthy of notice that nearly all persons, shortly after entering upon it, grow fond of

a life of so much liberty and independence, and become so healthful and buoyant in spirits, that few wish to return to the bustling and fretting city. Personally, I do not hesitate to confess that such was the spell that it exercised over me, that had it not been compulsory on my part to quit so primitive and agreeable a manner of living, I should certainly have remained in that romantic country until the end of my life.

Horses are much cheaper in Australia than they were two or three years ago. A good stock-horse can now be purchased for £15; choice kinds for the saddle and heavy draught horses still, however, realize a higher figure, the latter being scarce compared with lighter made ones. Those fit for the saddle only are very numerous, and can be purchased in Sydney from £6 and upwards. The markets are very fluctuating. I have myself sold horses at sums varying from £2 to £95 each. About ten years ago, there were few others save light-made horses to be found in Australia; but since that time, and more especially since the gold discoveries, there has been more attention paid to breeding and importing heavy entries from England, some of which have realized the enormous sum of six and seven hundred pounds each during the last six months.

Australian horses are generally very sure-footed, and their powers of endurance are very great. They are frequently ridden upwards of a hundred miles in a day, with no more substantial food than grass; and after having accomplished this journey, the saddles are taken off, and the owner giving the poor horse a kick, sends him to the bush to pick up his food as he best can, without any grooming.

The cattle are very numerous, and the markets uncertain, in consequence of large herds sometimes arriving in the port towns at the same time, while at other seasons a corresponding scarcity will occur, occasioning beef to rise from fourpence to one shilling per pound, or even higher still for a short period. Such high prices never exist long, for whenever the fact becomes known, stock-owners quickly

push some cattle into the market. I have known fat cattle sold for seventy shillings, while at another time the demand has so far exceeded the supply, that for a season beasts weighing from 900 to 1200 lbs. have realized £36 per head. There are great numbers of oxen used for draught in the bush. They are slow, but in wet weather they prove more sure than horses, although the latter are getting greatly into use, and as the roads improve they will gradually supersede the cloven-footed animals. The cattle for the greater part have large unsightly frames; and I find, from conversations with the cattle farmers, that the more compact and short-horned would fatten, sell better in the markets, and realize a higher price than the stock now generally bred.

I scarcely need refer to the vast numbers of sheep abounding in Australia. It supplies England with superior kinds of wool, and to a greater extent than all the rest of the world beside. Thousands are to be seen day after day congregated in flocks, although generally, whenever the employers can hire sufficient shepherds, they prefer their sheep to run in flocks of about twelve or fifteen hundred.

The shearing is an exciting time both for master and man; and where there are great numbers of sheep, it is no uncommon thing for twenty men to be employed for weeks at one place. It is quite a harvest for the shearer, who generally rides his own horse to his work, turning it into a paddock until his work is done and he has received cash for his labours. It is then by no means an infrequent occurrence for him to ride to the first public-house, and there swallow all his money, together with horse, bridle, and saddle, ere he departs, in the form of spirituous liquors; and, unfortunately, the innkeepers too often are the inciters to this wicked course, through a selfish desire to put the whole earnings of these men into their own pockets.

The indigenous fruits of this country are but few, and of little value to the settler; they serve chiefly as food for the numerous birds inhabiting the bush. The native cherry-tree produces fruit similar in colour to the red European fruit of

that name. They are about the size of a pea, marked by the singularity of having the stone outside. The tree is of a conical shape, resembling the cypress, and is very ornamental to the parts where it grows. I have on several occasions ridden my horse round them, and picked off some ripe fruit, which I found possessed of a slightly acidulous taste.

The native currants resemble in size and appearance the European fruit of that name, when the latter are in their green state. They are frequently used for tarts in the absence of any other kinds of fruit. They are found on a small scrub not unlike the juniper in England, and require a considerable quantity of sugar to render them at all palatable.

The raspberry is not much unlike that fruit as known among us, except that it grows in a miniature form, so as not to be thought scarcely worth picking off the trees. The native pear is a most peculiar production, for although presenting the appearance of the European fruit bearing that name, it in reality is no fruit at all, since it has no soft part about it, being more like a solid piece of wood than otherwise.

Another indigenous fruit, called the Hottentot fig, is eaten occasionally, both by the natives and the white population. I am told that they are not a bad substitute for tarts, in the absence of European fruits; but although I have frequently met with them, I never tasted these figs, either cooked or uncooked.

The monterry, or native apple, is a small berry resembling a miniature apple; it is the produce of a running plant found in profusion on sand-hills, and emits rather an aromatic flavour. It is eaten by the natives, and the children of the white population. I have tasted this fruit, but think very little of it, and can only compare the taste of it to those berries found on the yew tree in England.

These few are the only indigenous fruits which came under my notice during my rambles in New South Wales and

Victoria. In Terra Australis the aggregate number of plants is computed to be between four and five thousand. Most tropical and European fruits grow to a great perfection. Oranges, lemons, mulberries, figs, grapes, peaches, bananas, loquots, water melons, etc., etc., grow to great perfection, and are very abundant, especially in New South Wales. Victoria being comparatively a young colony, these fruits are not so plentiful, although the climate is eminently favourable to the production of gooseberries, currants, apples, pears, plums, raspberries, etc., and there is every prospect that by-and-bye great varieties of delicious fruits will be raised throughout all the settled parts of this fertile country.

The following brief remarks upon some of the most useful and generally known trees in Australia may not be deemed out of place, although I presume not to give the botanical names to any of them. I shall state only what I have seen with my own eyes.

The iron bark tree grows to a huge size, generally on the poorest land, and is invariably found on or near all the gold-fields. The wood is very hard, and is used chiefly for posts, whenever they are required of a particularly large size, as for the main posts in stock-yards, where they are required of great strength; and made out of this material, they stand for years without rotting. The bark has a peculiar gloomy appearance, being of a dark brown colour, approaching to blackness; and whenever the traveller casts his eyes over a spot where the ground is thickly studded over with them, it has a singular look. The bark of this tree is marked by eccentric relieve parts, something like carved work, rendering it most uncommon and striking.

The stringy bark is most useful to the colonists for paling, fencing, building, and the construction of huts. The wood itself is of a brown colour, and splits and saws easily. The bark is fibrous, and being very tough, it was a few years ago looked upon as the settler's friend; even now it is much

used for tying purposes, and in the absence of rope it certainly is a capital substitute. It is no uncommon thing still to hear men in the bush speak of this bark and the green hide (the latter is used for halters) as the settler's friend.

There are three varieties of trees, called the blue, white, and peppermint gum, all of which grow on good land, and produce very useful timber. The box and apple trees are also abundant, but not so useful as those previously alluded to. The cedar of Australia grows to a considerable size and height, and proves very useful when sawn into boards. The pine does not attain any great size, and is only seen in certain localities. The cherry, the cabbage palm, and the indigenous fig tree, I have already alluded to. The curra-jong is a picturesque tree, growing to the height of forty or fifty feet. The foliage is closely allied to the evergreens in England. The aborigines eat the root, which contains a certain portion of saccharine matter.

The tea tree is small, and of comparatively little use, it being occasionally used for rafters in buildings, and as long poles for temporary fencing. The leaves are peculiarly shaped, but the greatest curiosity is the bark, with its numerous layers, resembling tissue paper slightly stuck together in a hundred folds. It is the most unique thing of the kind I ever saw or heard of. I wrapped up a piece very carefully and brought it to England with me. These singular trees are found on flat ground, generally where there is surface water, although I have once, and only once, seen them on the summit of a mountain. The whole of the indigenous trees and shrubs of Australia are evergreen, and shed their bark annually. Some attain to a great height, with immensely large trunks, especially the gum trees, which grow on rich land in moist places.

The wild animals of Australia are not inconsiderable in point of numbers, yet they are remarkably destitute of ferociousness; indeed, few countries in the world are so favoured in this respect. The only animal destructive to the property

of the settlers is the dingo, or wild dog, which is about the colour of the English fox, but in size and strength it more nearly resembles the wolf. It commits serious depredations among flocks of sheep, killing considerable numbers in a short space of time. Indeed, unless well guarded against, the dingoes will seize upon these animals so suddenly and dexterously, that they have been known to kill twenty and upwards in the course of five minutes. The bite is poisonous, and generally proves fatal. They make a howling noise, running in packs, and scent their prey out at night. Their noise can be heard distinctly at a great distance, and more especially among the mountains, which are their favourite resort; although I have seen three of them together at one time on the flats, prowling about in search of calves in the middle of the day. I singled out one, and galloped my horse after it. I gained upon the animal, until within about fifty yards of him, when I was obliged to give up the chase through my horse being loaded with branding irons in front of the saddle.

The kangaroo, of which there are many varieties, is found about the scrubs in most parts of New South Wales and Victoria. The largest of these animals, commonly called the Old Man kangaroo, weighs from 150 to 200 pounds, and those next in order, of the smaller kinds, are termed the Walloby, Paddy Melon, the Kangaroo rat, and the Kangaroo mouse. The females of this class are provided with an abdominal pouch for the reception of their young. Although very timid, yet they fight desperately when closely pursued by the dogs with which they are hunted, and have been frequently known to keep them at bay for a considerable time; and, running to water holes, they will sometimes hold the dogs under water until they are drowned. They are very active, and will spring thirty feet at one leap. They are easily domesticated, and prove quite docile. The flesh of these animals is said by some to resemble mutton; but while admitting its delicious flavour, I am more inclined to compare it with venison.

The bandicoot, a small animal rather larger than a rat, is numerous in some parts, and, like the opossum and wombat, is nocturnal in its movements. The wombat is very singular in its shape and habits. It burrows in the ground, making large holes, and reminded me of the conies in England; the holes excavated by the former, however, are much larger than those of the little animal belonging to the mother country. Its legs and feet are very like those of the badger; the mouth resembles that of the rabbit, and its body is covered with dark brown fur. It is not dissimilar in shape, or even in taste, to the pig, which flavour the bandicoot is also said to possess. The burrows of the wombat are very dangerous to the horseman. The carcase of these animals seldom exceed more than twenty pounds in weight.

The opossum is about the size of a rabbit, and is very much like one in its general appearance, except the tail, which is long, and enables this little animal to hang on with it from the branches of the trees which it frequents. It feeds entirely on the leaves of the gum tree. The female, for the protection of its young, possesses a pouch, like the kangaroo. They may be seen by moonlight, sporting about from one limb of a tree to that of another, when the deadly aim of the sportsman with his gun brings numbers down to the ground. They serve the house dogs for food. They are also eaten by the natives, who cut them out of the hollow trees in the day-time with the tomahawk, and cook them just as they are killed, with the skin and intestines all together. I brought a domesticated one from New South Wales, but unfortunately lost it before reaching England, through the cage being wet in which it lay. I tried my hand, however, as a taxidermist, and brought home the skin in a good state of preservation.

The porcupine is found in some parts, although it never fell to my lot to catch sight of one. The indigenous bear, too, is found but rarely; it is of inconsiderable size, compared with those of other countries. There are two varieties in colour of the native cats, one being black with white

spots, while the other is of a sandy-coloured brown, and spotted as the other. They are both about the size of a polecat, and of a similar shape.

There are two varieties of the flying squirrel; one is called the sugar squirrel, being of a greyish colour, and the other variety is of a dark brown, almost approaching to blackness. Both of these little animals have a membrane extending from the fore to the hind leg, similar to the bat; it is quite white, and the contrast gives them a peculiar appearance. The flying fox assumes the appearance of a huge bat, the head resembling that of the animal from which the name is derived. The body is about six inches in length, and, like the bat, it is nocturnal in its habits. They are sometimes seen in large flocks, and make great havoc in gardens by destroying large quantities of fruit.

The duck-billed platipus I have also seen, with its furry skin, about the size of a small rabbit. This peculiar animal frequents lagoons and water-holes; it is rare and very shy in its disposition.

This brief description of the animals of Australia is all the information that my experience will enable me to give of them. I will now proceed to state what I know concerning the reptiles.

It is well known that snakes are numerous in Australia, there being thirty varieties, most of which are venomous to the highest degree, although few people get bitten by them. For my own part, I have only seen four varieties out of the number—the black, brown, diamond, and carpet snakes. The two first-named I have nearly trodden upon several times. I have seen them about six feet long, and I believe they are known to exist more than double that length, although rarely seen so large.

There are many varieties of lizards, three of which have come under my notice; one small kind, that is very numerous; the Jew lizard, rather larger; and another, the scaly kind, about eighteen inches in length, all of which are quite harmless. The guano is very like the lizard, but much

larger. They are oftentimes to be seen running up trees to get out of the reach of man. I have seen some with a body as large as an infant. They are not dangerous; dogs sometimes get bitten by them without any evil consequences resulting therefrom.

Frogs are very numerous in most of the water-holes and courses; they make a great noise in the night, which is frequently termed a frog concert. There are also scorpions, tarantulas, and centipedes, to be seen in the bush of Australia. The tarantula assumes the appearance of an immense spider, the bite of which is considered dangerous. The centipede, with its numerous legs (probably a hundred), resembles a dark brown grub; it is found in decayed timber and its bite is highly dangerous.

Locusts are numerous, I believe, in some parts, especially in South Australia, although I confess never to have seen more than a few; nor have I seen the ravages committed by them which are attributed to them in other parts of the world.

The indigenous bees are very small, only about the size of the common house-fly. In some parts they are numerous, producing about three pounds of honey from each nest. The English bee abounds, too, in a wild as well as a domesticated state, having been imported years ago from the mother country; and since that time they have been propagated far and wide, making their nests on the limbs and in the hollow parts of trees. They produce honey in larger quantities than the native bee, although the flavour of the two very nearly resembles each other, bearing no comparison with the delicious English honey, in consequence of the absence of that profusion of blossoms and flowers in Australia which is to be found in the old country.

The mosquito is troublesome to the new-comer, and the flies are very numerous and annoying. The fire-fly is seen in some parts, but more particularly near water-courses. The sand-fly frequents creeks and rivers, and is found troublesome and annoying to horses in hot weather. Ants are

very numerous, both in their variety as well as numbers. Myriads are to be seen daily, and some kinds carry up the earth to as much as four, five, and six feet in height. There is the flying ant, and a large kind in two colours, red and black, both of which are commonly called soldier ants, not only on account of their size, but more particularly for their biting propensities. I have felt their bite, which produced most acute pain for half an hour, inflaming the bitten part very much, although nothing serious resulted from it.

I suppose there is scarcely a country in the world where there is a greater variety of insects than in Australia, and many of them are very beautiful, although so few, comparatively, are known to mankind generally. There is great scope for an enterprising naturalist throughout these different colonies, who might write volume upon volume about them, without even then describing the whole of that wonderful and interesting section of God's creation, or a thousandth portion of the wisdom which the Supreme Being has evinced in their formation, and in the ample provision which he has made for the support of each and all of these myriads of tiny creatures.

With respect to the birds, the reader will bear in mind what I have already stated, that I myself collected in a short space of time no less than a hundred varieties. I will, therefore, make a few passing remarks upon those kinds which struck me most forcibly.

The emu is a giant-like bird, standing, when erect, from five to six feet in height, its body being covered with a double sort of feathers, somewhat resembling fur or hair, except on their wings, which are like the feathers of ordinary birds. Although these wings are very small, and altogether disproportionate to the size of its body, yet they materially assist it in its flight across the plains when chased by man and horse. On such occasions, they run as fast as the horse can gallop, taking immense strides, so as occasionally to frustrate the designs of their pursuers. They are sometimes seen in numbers of ten or a dozen toge-

ther, but more frequently in pairs, or half-a-dozen at one time.

The bustard, or wild turkey, I have frequently seen on the plains, and have galloped my horse up to within gunshot of some, as they find it difficult to rise, and have to run along the ground some distance before they are able to mount in the air. They are very large, so much so that one of my men when seeing one sitting on the ground in the distance, moving its wings, fancied it was a woman arranging her shawl.

The swans are black, and are plentiful in rivers and other parts, although, like the wild goose, they are confined to particular localities. The black and wood duck are very abundant, as also are the widgeon and teal. The wood duck frequents the bush as well as water-courses, and may be seen alighting on the limbs of trees when disturbed. They are parti-coloured, especially the wings, which are brown, black, and white, and all of these four last-named water-fowl are excellent eating. There are various divers to be occasionally seen. The water-hen, too, frequents the lagoons, being a graceful-looking bird, with handsome plumage. Quails, pigeons, and parrots, are very abundant and delicious eating; also the magpie, which is as good as a pigeon for flavour, as I know by experience, having eaten many of them during my journeys through the bush.

The sandpiper and snipe are to be found in most marshy places; the latter is closely allied to those of the mother country. The black and white cockatoo are numerous, especially the latter, which I have seen frequently in large flocks, as common as crows, and as crafty too, proving very destructive to the wheat crops, unless the settler has a dog to drive them off. The crow exists in Australia in great numbers, and appears exactly the same kind of bird as those in England; but of the two, the Australian is the boldest. They are not eaten, like the white cockatoo.

There are great varieties in hawks, from small ones up to the eagle in size. The largest variety is generally termed

the eagle-hawk, and is very destructive to chickens and lambs, unless well guarded against. The lyre-bird is very shy and local in its habits, and is often called the pheasant, the male bird possessing a splendid large tail; and when sporting in the sunshine amongst the trees in scrubby parts, this fine bird has a most showy appearance. The athene boobook is commonly called the cuckoo, as it makes a noise in the night very much like that charming bird of northern climes, although, strictly speaking, it does not belong to the same genus, it being in reality a small species of the owl tribe. I have in my small collection three varieties of cuckoo, the smallest of them being very little larger than the skylark, and the largest one is closely allied in colour and size to the singing cuckoo of the north.

The laughing jackass is the last bird I shall here remark upon, though probably not the least interesting. It is about the size of a pigeon, with breast and under parts white, the head and back being brown. It has a peculiar broad mouth, with which it is said it takes up a snake, mounting in the air with it and letting the reptile fall to the ground, and repeating this operation until the snake is dead, when it falls to and picks its bones quite clean. The settlers prize this bird very much, and do not destroy it, as it not only kills snakes, but rouses the inmates of the huts at day-break, while at night it is heard just as it is getting dark. From these circumstances it is called the settler's clock. The laughing jackass is well known throughout Australia, and is supposed to make a noise louder than any human being.

The few birds which I have thus briefly alluded to, form but a small portion of the number that I am partially acquainted with, and I presume only an exceedingly trifling part of those to be found in the various parts of the land.

There do not appear to be any great quantity of fishes in the rivers of Australia, at least not as far as my limited experience aided me in forming an opinion, although I exerted myself considerably to find out all particulars relative

to them. The cod is found in most rivers, and attains a large size. It is caught of various sizes, from a few pounds weight up to as many as forty. The bream and mullet are similar to those caught in England. The catfish is singular in its appearance, having a large head and whiskers similar to the animal from which it derives its name. It is frequently caught weighing a dozen pounds, and even heavier than that at times. Eels are found in abundance, and of delicious flavour, varying in size from twelve inches to three feet in length. I am informed, however, that they are never found eastward of the dividing range of mountains. I have repeatedly been told of it, therefore I presume there must be some truth in the statement. Mussels are to be found in various parts, and the fresh-water lobster is caught in the river Murray, and is considered very fine. I am not aware that it is taken in any other part, except that I have seen small specimens caught in the marshes near Botany Bay. The tortoise is plentiful in the lagoons and water-holes; it is easily caught, and is eaten by many of the colonists, who tell me that it makes excellent soup. The whole of the fishes mentioned above are eaten, and are considered wholesome; indeed they are most acceptable as a variation of the fare of the colonist, who lives principally on bread and meat.

On the whole, the Australian colonies are universally admitted to enjoy an extremely healthy climate. There is little to fear from diseases of any kind, except ophthalmia. Infantile diseases are very rare, so that it is rather a poor country for medical men, their assistance being seldom sought after. If required, however, there is one to be found in most districts, who generally combines farming of some kind with his professional duties, otherwise, unless he be a man of capital, it is much to be doubted whether his business as a medical man alone would pay him. Rheumatism is complained of at times; but I have invariably found it to be caused by sleeping on the ground, or wearing wet clothes.

Australia being in the southern hemisphere, the seasons are of course opposite to those of the northern. In the winter, the thermometer ranges from 45° to 60° Fahrenheit, and in summer from 65° to 90°, except in rare cases, during the few hours when the hot winds prevail. In such seasons, it has been known to rise as high as 120° in the shade ; but this latter heat is very seldom felt. Thunder-storms are not so frequent as might be supposed, considering the close proximity of New South Wales and Victoria to the tropics. The summer is of course much warmer than that of England, yet the clear azure sky above, and the scorching rays of the blazing sun, are partly modified by the pure and balmy atmosphere ; consequently, the weather is not so oppressively hot as to become exhaustive even to debilitated constitutions. The mornings and evenings, even in the height of summer, are cool, which often renders a good fire acceptable. In the hot weather the grass is frequently parched up, so that this is the worst season to judge of the beauties of the country ; but such a magical influence have a few soaking showers of rain, that in a few days afterwards the face of the country is again covered with a spring-like verdure. Very many lovely days occur in mid-winter, and although the nights may prove frosty, yet I have known it pleasant day after day, and week after week, without any obscuration of the sun. After so much has been said and written about the excellence of the climate, it will be useless to dilate more upon a subject so well understood. By some authors the salubrity of Australia has been gravely questioned ; but so far as my own general health and feelings are to be taken as a guide, I can state with confidence that the climate is delightful, and never before did I enjoy such good health and buoyancy of spirits since I had arrived at manhood.

The aborigines of this country occupy almost the lowest place in the graduated scale of the human species. Their skin is of a dark chocolate colour ; their hair is black, and a little inclined to be woolly ; their noses are flat, with

large nostrils, their lips thick, and their mouths wide ; and many years of intercourse with Europeans have not materially changed their habits. They still live in their native state in mimas or gunyahs, made of bark, placed slantingly against a tree, under which they crawl during the wet weather. Many of them are clad with an old blanket, or an opossum cloak, wrapped round them; whilst others, with most of the children, are still to be seen in a state of nudity. Very few of them will work any length of time; they rove about from place to place, and endeavour to get all they can from the settlers, when they quickly absent themselves, and are no more to be seen in that locality for months. They frequently say that, "black fellow no like work," and that "white fellow fool to work hard."

They are very treacherous and cowardly, and entertain rude and barbarous notions of the Supreme Being and a future state. The evil spirit they term "Yahor," (devil, devil) of whom they live in great terror. They are very fond of spirituous liquors, of smoking tobacco, and of European clothes. They are never seen to have a good fire, suitable for a large party, but they light up numerous small ones, with merely a handful of sticks, when there are cart-loads lying close by. It is a singular picture to see these numerous miniature fires, with the darkies, in a state of nudity, sitting around on the ground, warming their hands, without opening their mouths to speak except at long intervals of time. The remnants of their food the men throw to their gins (wives).

They are accustomed to ornament their breast, arms, and back with shells, inflicting upon themselves cicatrised marks, which remain all their life-time. They are fond of ornamenting their persons with the teeth of the kangaroo, the bones of fish, the feathers of birds, and beads made of a small kind of reed. Kangaroo-rat skins, cut up lengthwise, are also used to ornament the waist, where they are fastened round and allowed to hang down loosely, in a similar manner as tassels are worn in Europe.

After the death of any near relative, both men and women blacken their faces and bodies with charcoal and grease; but in times of rejoicing, they paint themselves with red ochre, using oil or grease of such kinds as they can procure. Their persons smell very disagreeably to Europeans, and even horses and working bullocks do not like them to approach very near, in consequence of their bad odour.

Their principal weapons, used for amusement, hunting, and war purposes, are the spear, waddie, bomerang, hieleman, and wawarang. The two latter are different sorts of shields, the former being used for parrying blows in battle, and the latter is employed during their dances, when they strike it with a club in order to beat time thereon. The natives are very dexterous in throwing the spear, and seldom, at a distance of sixty or eighty yards, fail to strike the object which they aim at. The waddie is a weapon used either for offensive or defensive purposes, and is nothing else than a club, formed of different sizes, out of very hard wood. The bomerang is a curved piece of wood, which is thrown with great precision to the distance of several hundred feet; and taking a circuit in the air, it returns with great rapidity to the spot from whence it was at first thrown. These weapons are used both for diversion and war purposes, although I am pleased to state, that so far as New South Wales and Victoria are concerned, they are seldom used except for amusement in all the districts settled by Europeans. Their tools are formed of sharpened shells and pieces of quartz rock, although many of them, who mingle at all with the white population, contrive to beg old cutting instruments from the settlers.

With respect to the funeral rites observed by the natives, so far as they have come under my notice, I may state that some bury their dead in a sitting posture, lighting a small fire under the corpse previous to covering it with earth; whilst others place the body lengthwise, and fence in the grave with great care. Some are known to wrap the corpse

up tight in some kind of wearing apparel, and place it in an erect posture in the hollow of a tree. A different tribe again is known to lay their dead in a bark canoe, and after covering it over with herbage, it is left for the wild dogs and birds of prey to feed upon.

The grand dance of these blacks takes place before a fight, at the celebration of marriages, and on other festive occasions. It generally comes off either at night or early in the morning. They prepare several fires near the selected spot. For this important ceremony, the men paint their naked bodies with bright colours in imitation of full dress. The women and children sit round the fires, the former beating exact and admirable time on their opossum skins, whilst the lords of the creation, all springing from the ground at the same instant, commence their peculiar tribal dance. Their appearance is wild in the extreme, and in dancing their gestures and attitudes are equally so. They generally have bones and small stones with feathers tied on their hair, and with branches of trees tied to their ancles, they make a great rustling noise.

There is little or no fear now entertained of any tribe in either of the two chief colonies, except it be very low down the river Murray and in the Moreton Bay district. I have always found them very civil, when I have come into contact with them. Their numbers are fast decreasing, and ere many years have elapsed, there will be but a small remnant left of any of the tribes now found in the two settled districts of that great country. The natives are not supposed to attain to very great ages generally, although I heard of one aboriginal chief dying from complete decay of nature, and who was supposed to be upwards of one hundred years of age. He had lived to see the fall of nearly all his tribe. He never had a wife, and his saying "Bail me got him gin," will long be remembered. He was very abstemious, loved tobacco, but objected to taking strong waters; he liked to live well, but never would eat pork. The particular locality where he lived

and died was always considered to be his own property, and was named after his tribe. The white people left him in charge of their home occasionally; but nothing could induce him to sleep inside an European dwelling, and he would suffer no one to enter but "masser" or "misser." He was partially deaf, but his eyes continued tolerably strong, and his teeth were superb. He was occasionally very irritable, and would abuse those who protected him if they failed to attend to his wants. He would sometimes work a little, in cutting up wood with a tomahawk, in a sitting posture. He was altogether a curious specimen of his dwindling race, and few will ever look on his like again.

The wives of the natives are termed *Lubra*, or *Gin*, and the children *Pigninny*, or *Lubra Pigninny* for girls. There are a few of the male natives who make good servants, and I have occasionally met with one who was a first-rate horseman; but on the whole, both sexes are idle, and prove very poor helps to the white population.

CHAPTER XII.

ADVICE—OPINIONS—CONCLUSION.

GREAT facilities are afforded in the present day to persons desirous of proceeding either to Sydney or Melbourne, for ever since the gold discovery, numerous vessels have been laid on expressly for the Australian trade; no one need, therefore, waste much time in procuring a suitable ship. I have gone on board many newly-arrived vessels from England during my repeated visits to the port towns of Australia, and have generally found grumblers amongst the passengers, more particularly with the intermediate and steerage portion of them. Many of them have complained of the living; but the fault too often rests with themselves; for on being served out with their regular allowance, they very imprudently consume all their eatables before the day arrives to receive more. I would recommend to intermediate or steerage passengers (if their means allow of it), that they should provide themselves with some little extra comforts, such as a few bottles of spirits or wine, arrowroot and spices; not, however, for the purpose of habituating themselves to take these things, except for medicinal purposes, whenever they really require such stimulants. I would advise them also to take a little cheese, which is a great luxury on a long voyage, as my experience has proved it to be. A few currants and eggs, too, should always be secured, whenever they can be afforded: the latter will keep well for many weeks, after

washing them over with gum arabic to stop the pores, and packing them without shaking. A little extra flour is also a desirable thing; and I would recommend Jones's patent flour, which can be procured at a reasonable price in London. Tartaric acid and carbonate of soda will be found useful to lighten the bread; or by taking a few hops, and boiling them with sugar and flour in a moderate supply of water, good yeast may be made, which, after it has been bottled for a few days, will be fit for use. Fresh bread is found a great comfort on a long voyage, and more especially to those suffering from sea-sickness.

With regard to wearing apparel, after so much has been written upon the subject, I will merely throw out a few hints, as most people I find please their own taste after all the fuss made in recommending any particular kind of attire. I should say to all classes, take suitable garments for all kinds of weather, hot and cold, wet and dry, so as to be prepared against these vicissitudes; but, at the same time, do not trouble yourselves to take out large quantities of anything, unless you have decided to settle down in the bush, far away from the great towns, and unless your position will enable you comfortably to spare the few extra pounds; though even then I would say, do not burden yourselves with too much luggage; and whatever clothing you take, let it be of strong material and well put together, as there is abundance of slop-made goods at present in Australia. Many articles in drapery may be purchased considerably cheaper than in England, at times when the markets are glutted. I would recommend persons to take out all the money they possibly can, as that does wonders in Australia, as in other parts of the world.

The best class of ships that can be selected for a long tedious voyage are those of medium or large sizes: small vessels, for the most part, make long passages, and do not possess those comforts which are desirable and even indispensable to many delicate constitutions. I throw out these few hints entirely as the result of my own experience and

observations, and do not dwell upon the theories of others. I write exactly as things are whenever they present themselves to my view. There are many highly respectable shipping agents and owners both in London and Liverpool; and so far as my own feelings are concerned, and from what has come under my own notice, as regards vessels and shipping agents, I know none in whom I should place greater confidence than Messrs. Marshall, Eddrige and Co., of 34, Fenchurch Street, London. I have always found these gentlemen very correct and obliging in business, as well as economical in their charges. I have also found them very communicative to intending emigrants, affording them all such information as they may desire, in whatever sphere of life the applicants may happen to have moved.

It is most desirable that great circumspection should be observed by all female passengers, whether married or otherwise, for I have repeatedly been compelled to witness great indiscretions and even immoralities on board, and have also heard the testimony of highly respectable gentlemen to the same effect. If it lay in my power to prevent it, I would not, on any consideration, allow a female belonging to my family to go out unprotected by some near and prudent relative. Unfortunately, the consequences of inattention to this duty of late years have proved heart-rending to many, when the truth has been brought to light.

Every person who can read, should take as many books as he conveniently can, as they are soon esteemed great luxuries, after having left home a few weeks. There is plenty of time for all to read when on the ocean; even the sailors find seasons for it, and many of them delight in sitting for hours poring over an interesting work. The voyager should endeavour to render himself cheerful, affable, and agreeable to all on board, as occasion may require; and whenever he has an opportunity of pacing the deck for exercise, it ought strictly to be embraced, as the healthfulness of many depends entirely upon that precaution. Long voyages will often cause most amiable

persons to become slightly irritable before its termination, owing to the monotony of the scene and the wearisome confinement.

Persons going to Australia by any of the large ships cannot conveniently wash out much linen, and if they require any to be done on board, the charge is rather high; they should, therefore, provide themselves accordingly.

The most suitable men for the colonies are those who are brought up to manual labour, whether they intend going to the gold mines, or think of settling down in the bush to pay attention to any kind of farming. There are a limited number of mercantile men required; but generally the latter class are too numerous, while the former are too few in number. The merchant or clerk cannot always find a business suitable; but the labouring man can, without doubt, find employment; and if a capitalist, he will be able to purchase or rent land that, if he be prudent, will ultimately pay him for his outlay.

I will now venture to suggest the most suitable parts for a person to settle in, who is in possession of from one to five hundred pounds after landing; and to a man who can command thousands, I will briefly allude to those districts which are likely to accord with his views.

In the first place, with respect to the man of small capital. As soon as he lands in Australia, if he wishes to purchase land, let him first procure the "Government Gazette," wherein is contained all particulars relative to land sales. He can then decide how best to act; whether to leave his family in town, or to take them at once into the bush, near to the part where the land is measured ready for the day of sale. The upset price for country land is twenty shillings per acre, and sometimes it gets knocked down for that figure; but, on the other hand, it sometimes realizes as much as three or four pounds, whenever there are numerous competitors, although the latter prices are rarely obtained by the government.

The best localities which I know of in the two colonies

for a man with limited means to purchase land, are the following: first, in South Wales, near the township of Cambden, about forty miles from Sydney; in the neighbourhood of Richmond, county of Cumberland; and at Mittagong, eighty miles from Sydney, near the township of Berrima; at Picton, fifty miles from the sea port town; and at Wollongong, on the sea coast: the three last-named are in the county of Cambden. In the county of St. Vincent, near the township of Braidwood, about 160 miles from Sydney, there are many nice pieces of land, especially a tract adjacent to the Shoalhaven river. In the counties of Argyle, King, and Roxburgh, westward of Goulbourn (which is 135 miles from the capital), and on the banks of the Wollondilly, Fish, Burrawa, and Lachlan rivers, there are various tracts of land, which have been surveyed by government, and are to be put up and sold in quantities suitable for small capitalists. The reader will bear in mind, however, that unless the immigrant goes something like 200 miles into the interior, he would not be likely to get any considerable scope to let his horses or cattle run upon, which to some would be a consideration; but of course all depends upon the idea of the individual himself, as to what he intends turning his attention to.

There is a valuable tract of land now being settled near the Snowy Mountains, about three hundred miles from Sydney; also near Gundagai, on the river Murrumbidgee; and close to Albury, situated on the banks of the river Murray, which latter place is nearly four hundred miles from the capital of New South Wales, and from Melbourne a little more than two hundred. There are other localities, however, in the large colony now spoken of, from which the new-comer might select, if he chose; but those I have noticed are my own favourite spots; and having been over numerous parts besides those named, I flatter myself that I am in a position to speak with some authority on the matter.

In Victoria, also, there are many localities suitable for small capitalists; but of late, land has been sold higher in price

here than in the sister-colony. Those who devote ordinary attention to agriculture, in a small way, make it pay well; however, the reader must bear in mind that Victoria is not an agricultural country generally, but is more particularly adapted for grazing purposes; consequently, no one will be likely to cultivate the soil to any great extent, which thus renders all productions more valuable than they otherwise would be. Within a few miles of Geelong, there are hundreds of acres of land fit for cultivation, also between Melbourne and the Bendigo diggings, and all within a hundred miles of Port Victoria. Then again on the great northern track towards New South Wales, contiguous to Kilmore; and farther on, there is the township of Avinal recently laid out, being situated on a rich level piece of land adjacent to the banks of Hew's Creek. The first-named locality is about forty, and the latter seventy miles from the capital.

The township of Avinal, and one about thirty miles farther still from Melbourne called Longwood, though only recently established, promise ere long to be most desirable spots for small capitalists to settle upon. Persons are not obliged at all times to attend entirely to farming, as tradesmen are required as well; and the two occupations combined oftentimes proves very lucrative. I can recommend the two last-named localities, as I know them to be desirable spots. There is a medical man settled in each of the two townships, with both of whom I am acquainted. One of them showed me a nice level and rich piece of land which he was about clearing, and at which he worked himself, like one of his men.

There are two other regions which I will notice here; the first, about 130 miles from Melbourne, is a tract of land situated on the Broken river, contiguous to the township of Benella; and the second is the township of Wangaratta and the level parts adjacent, situated on either side of the Ovens river, where there is a bridge lately built, which is very convenient for the mail as well as for travellers generally.

In the next place, persons possessed of a few thousands, and wishing to become squatters, will find it rather difficult to get suited without either purchasing a station already formed and stocked, or pushing farther into the bush, beyond any of the settled parts, and forming one for themselves. This latter step, however, requires some little energy; while the former plan can be carried out by only waiting a few weeks or months on the watch for an opportunity, as there are generally some few stations in the market for sale.

In New South Wales I know but few parts suitable to open up as fresh stations. I have had plenty of opportunities of making inquiries of gentlemen who own great numbers of sheep and cattle in the Moreton Bay district, and one and all have told me that there is plenty of scope there for enterprising men of capital, either to keep cattle or sheep, the country round about being very suitable. But it will behove the squatter to be on his guard against the black population, though, as far as my own feelings are concerned, I should not allow their presence to prevent my settling in that district, if I thought of going myself, as I have heard that whenever any of the white people are molested by the natives, it is almost certain to be some who are unprotected by fire-arms. It is very rarely the case now that the aborigines are bold enough to face the gun.

There is an excellent spot in which to form cattle runs, situated in the district called Billibung, between the Murrumbidgee and the Murray rivers. It labours, however, under the serious disadvantage of a scarcity of water in summer, so that all cattle and horses have to go to one or the other of the two rivers named above. Yet a man of energy, backed by a few thousand pounds, might soon overcome this obstacle, by the formation of artificial lagoons midway between the two streams—a plan which, if carried out, would be quite a fortune to the enterprising individual, as there is no other part otherwise so suitable for cattle runs in the two colonies, from the abundance of rich grass and

the salt-bush scrub, which latter possesses such peculiar fattening properties. The fattest beef sent either to Melbourne or Sydney is produced in the part alluded to. The district is not suitable for sheep, but horses and cattle thrive there wonderfully. It is about a uniform distance between Melbourne and Sydney.

I would advise persons who feel inclined to go to the gold mines of Australia, not to join any one in England, unless they are tried friends; and if so, club together by all means; but if you have no friend whose character you well know, leave the choice of a companion till you reach the golden land, as it will be much better not to enter into any engagement previous to emigrating than to risk separation after once beginning to labour. The right sort of men to go to the diggings are those possessed of good constitutions, and who have been accustomed to manual labour. If such are desirous of trying their luck in the lottery of gold-digging, I should say, go by all means; and if energetic, and going judiciously to work, there is no fear of losing, while there is a good chance on their side of realising a fortune in a short time. It is no use whatever for persons to go to the diggings expecting to pick up gold without labour, or to reach that field for their exertions without encountering what the faint-hearted would term trials; although such trivial affairs, on one's journey in a climate like Australia, cannot be strictly called difficulties. The coward had better, therefore, stay at home, as he will never get gold without costing him too much silver to procure it; he had much better give up the idea at once, as he might be tempted to turn back after the first attempt.

I write according to my own experience, having had with me several young men whose bodily strength was adequate to much labour, but whose weak heads discouraged their strong bodies, so that they turned out no more helpful than school boys, except in the matter of eating and drinking.

It is a rough kind of life when settled down for a few months on the diggings; but then it is an independent one,

and this is the thing which charms the hearts of thousands, especially when they chance to have a run of good luck at the commencement of such a career.

With respect to the comparative riches of the gold-fields of the two colonies, the public are well aware which has exported the largest quantity of the precious metal; yet many are of opinion that could New South Wales only get the same amount of prosperity in the various gold-producing localities as Victoria has had, it would prove superior to the riches of the sister colony. Such are my own views, from an intimate knowledge of the geological formation of both regions; and I believe the day is not far distant when we shall hear of such wonderful discoveries in New South Wales as will astonish the world.

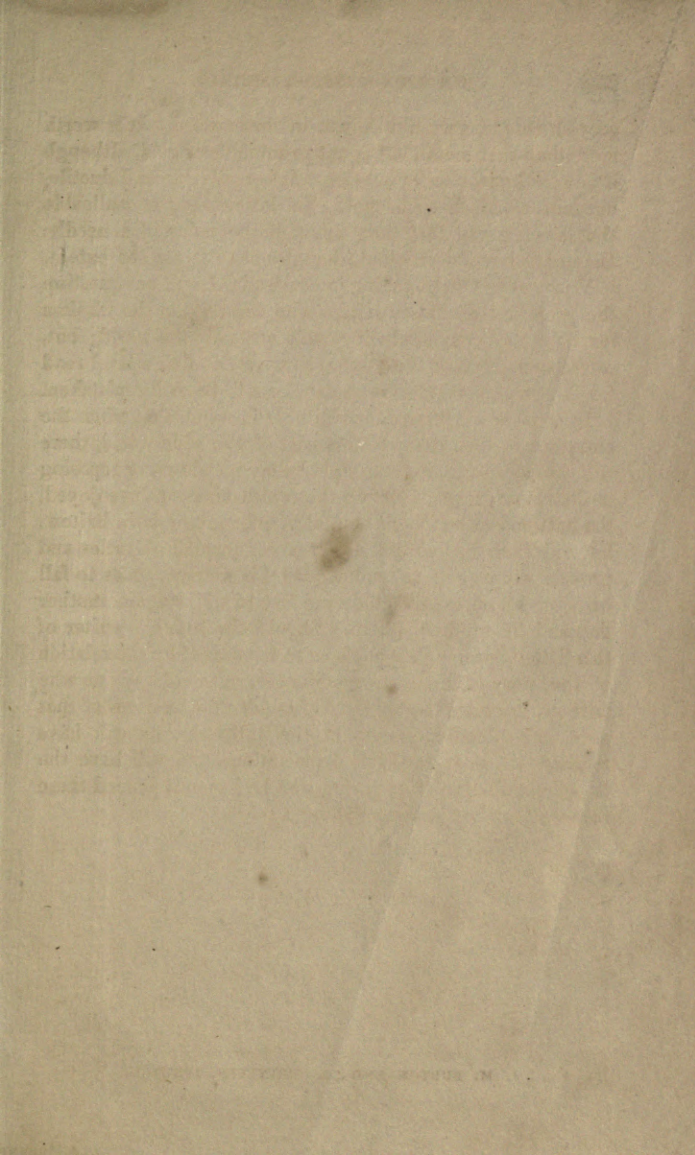
The advice given to those proceeding to Australia as labourers or farmers, respecting what they should take out, is also applicable to the intending miner. I would tell him to take nothing but a moderate supply of clothing, and all the money he can, which may be invested in one of the banking establishments either in Sydney or Melbourne. Take no machinery at all for the diggings, and leave every mining tool alone till you reach the field of labour, where all sorts of tools can be purchased cheaper than in the port towns. By this method, you will save the carriage also. These few simple remarks, if carried out, may perchance prove of some little service.

It is well when we are going on a journey, to know the comparative value of precious metals and stones; for if perchance any are caught sight of, and the traveller is aware of their being worth stooping for, he will bend his back to pick them up. I will, therefore, offer a few brief remarks upon those kinds which miners are likely to find in gold-producing countries. Yellow mica is of a yellowish colour, of shining appearance, and of small specific gravity. Iron pyrites is hard, brittle, and like the mica, it being of small specific gravity; both of these are of no value to the miner. Those that follow, however, are valuable. Platinum is of a steel

greyish colour, very like silver in appearance. It is worth more than that metal, but is not so valuable as gold, although it is well known to be heavier. It is malleable and ductile, but not so much so as gold, the latter being so malleable that a scale can be taken up with the point of a needle. Diamonds have been found, though not to any great extent.

With respect to travelling in Australia, I will not question the propriety of those writers who term it on the whole a level country, compared with many others in the world; but, at the same time, if the wayfarer expects to find a level road for the greater part of his course, he will be sadly mistaken.

In conclusion, the reader will bear in mind, that when the emigrant is thrown upon this part of the wide world, there will be no sauntering through balmy meadows, or reposing in delicious groves. Before those pleasures can be enjoyed, the battle must be fought manfully, as by a true-born Briton; he will then be certain either to conquer all obstacles and prove a winner, or to make good his retreat, so as to fall back on his strongest hold, and live to strive again another day and in another sphere. Should the humble writer of this little unpretending book be so honoured, by the relation of the story of his own experiences, as to aid any one who is about to renew the battle of life under the auspices of that new and splendid country at the antipodes, he will have realised his most sanguine expectations, and will have the happy satisfaction of believing that he has not penned these pages altogether in vain.



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